

CALIFORNIA'S  
TITLE IV-B  
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PLAN  
ANNUAL PROGRESS AND SERVICES REPORT  
FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2008  
JUNE 30, 2008



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**APSR  
FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR (FFY) 2008  
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## **Executive Summary**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

While significant progress has been made to reach our goals, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) realizes that continued efforts to improve practice and outcomes for children and families are essential to meet California's vision for child welfare practice. The state's efforts to examine and improve the child welfare services (CWS) system, as well as respond to the federal review with a Program Improvement Plan (PIP), continues to support the need for developing a system that can provide a public accounting of outcomes for children and families. This report highlights progress made since the June 30, 2007 Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) in implementing the changes needed to make this a reality. This is the fourth APSR to the state's 5-year Child and Family Services (Title IV-B) Plan, approved September 17, 2004, for federal fiscal years 2005 through 2009.

June 30, 2005, marked the end of California's PIP. However, some of the activities contained in the PIP are continuing; therefore, the original specific goals and objectives are incorporated in the current APSR. The measurement methods for these goals and objectives are contained in California's PIP, which is available on the CDSS web site and located at: <http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cfsr/default.htm>.

While California is committed to improving outcomes for children and their families, it is clear that critical to the success of our improvement efforts will be both adequate and flexible funding, as well as the active participation and collaboration with other stakeholders at the state, county, community and neighborhood levels.

California will continue, through its CWS System Improvements, to make enhancements to ensure the safety of children, to promote their right to a stable, permanent home and enhance their well-being. Although California has made significant financial commitment to child welfare services, it is important to note that California is in uncertain budget times. The following are state general fund allocations for state fiscal year (SFY) 2007/08 for CWS System Improvement:

- \$61.4 million for the Child Welfare Services Outcomes Improvement Project (CWSOIP). These funds were allocated to counties to finance activities identified in the counties' system improvement plans.
- \$5 million to support additional administrative responsibilities associated with the planning and coordination of the periodic county self-assessments and the annual updates to the county system improvement plans.
- \$1 million to reimburse counties for costs associated with the peer quality case review and costs related to the additional data requirements associated with the new mandated activities counties must accomplish to implement the State's Program Improvement Plan and the California Child and Family Services Review process.
- \$19 million allocated for outcome and system improvements identified through peer quality case reviews, self assessments and system improvement plans. Each county CWS and Probation department was awarded a specific portion of this allocation based on a percent to statewide total of each county's average monthly caseload, with a minimum allocation of \$10,000.

In addition to the funding augmentation, California has passed key legislation to continue efforts to improve gaps in the state's foster care system. AB 2216 - Child Welfare Leadership and Performance Accountability Act of 2006, which Governor Schwarzenegger signed into law, to establish, among other things, the California Child Welfare Council (CWC) convened for the first time in November 2007. The CWC is designed to address the needs of foster children in the foster care system or in danger of out-of-home placement throughout the state. The first of its kind in California, which brings together the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches to improve child and youth outcomes through increased collaboration and coordination among the programs, services and processes administered by the multiple agencies and courts that serve children and youth in California's child welfare system. The CWC will build upon the work of the Blue Ribbon Commission, the State Interagency Team for Children and Youth (SIT), and other collaborative efforts throughout the state.

The SIT is chaired by CDSS and is comprised of representatives from Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), the Department of Mental Health (DMH), the Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs (ADP), the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), the California Department of Education (CDE), the Employment Development Department (EDD), the Department of Justice (DOJ), the Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), the California First 5 Commission, the California Workforce Investment Board, the Office of the Chancellor for California Community Colleges, and the Foundation Consortium. The purpose of the SIT is to provide innovative leadership and guidance to facilitate implementation of improved system benefiting the common population of children, youth and families served by SIT agencies. The SIT promotes shared responsibility and accountability for the welfare of children by promoting the alignment of planning, funding and policy across state departments. An update of their activities is contained in the Safety and Well-Being sections.

The Blue Ribbon Commission (BRC) was established by Justice Ronald M George to provide recommendations to the Judicial Council of California on ways the courts and their partners can improve safety, permanency, well-being, and fairness outcomes for children and families. The commission is a high level, multidisciplinary body providing leadership on the issues that face our foster children and their families and the courts and agencies that serve them. The commission issued draft recommendations for public comment on March 14, 2008. The recommendations focus on four areas: 1) efforts to prevent removal and achieve permanency; 2) court reforms; 3) collaboration between the courts and their child welfare partners; and 4) resources and funding. The recommendations will be finalized by August 2008 and presented to the Judicial Council along with an implementation plan. The draft recommendations are available at [www.courtinfo.ca.gov/blueribbon](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/blueribbon). An update of their activities this year is contained in the Permanency section.

The Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership is a public-private partnership whose purpose is improving the lives of children and families who are in or at risk of entering the state's child welfare system. Formed in 2006, the Partnership includes organizations committed to investing in the practices and supportive infrastructure that will improve the child welfare outcomes. The Co-investment Partnership includes the CDSS, the CWDA, and the AOC, and private philanthropic foundations including the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Casey Family Programs, the Stuart Foundation, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation and the Zellerbach Family Foundation. An update of their activities is contained in the Systemic Factors section.

Working with legislative sponsors of AB 1331 (Evans), including the John Burton Foundation and Public Interest Law Project, the CDSS convened a workgroup to successfully negotiate with the Social Security Administration (SSA) and receive federal approval in January 2008 to allow disabled foster youth to apply for Social Security Income (SSI) benefits. This approval enables California to move forward with the provisions of AB 1331 to allow counties to transfer a foster youth's case from a federal foster care benefits to state foster care benefits for one month to allow the SSA to accept and process a SSI application before a foster youth turns 18 years of age and exits foster care.

AB 1453 (Soto) was signed by Governor Schwarzenegger on October 11, 2007. This law for Residentially Based Services reform encourages counties to develop partnerships with non-profit agencies to test alternative programs to group home care, so that children with complex emotional and behavioral needs are matched with appropriate services, while staying connected to their communities. An update of the activities of this bill is contained in the Permanency section.

### **Current Status of California's 2007 Children and Family Services Review (CFSR)**

The CDSS completed its statewide assessment December 2007. The assessment process included: a) stakeholder input from 31 focus groups; b) statewide convening (approximately 225 attended) where participants provided input on continuous improvement strategies; and c) a statewide assessment team comprised of representatives from tribes, probation, court personnel, former foster youth, county social service agencies serving children and families, parents, caregivers, state agencies, and individuals with expertise in child welfare.

Onsite reviews, the second phase of the CFSR, included local and state level stakeholder interviews and case reviews in the three onsite counties of Fresno, Los Angeles, and Santa Clara counties during the week of February 4-8, 2008. A combined total of 65 cases were reviewed for California. Los Angeles County is a required site as the state's largest metropolitan area and the other sites were chosen based on a representation of State outcomes, demographics, and innovative practices.

The CDSS received an advanced copy of the CFSR report on June 9, 2008. The document presented findings for the California CFSR which were derived from the Statewide Assessment, the state Data Profile, and a review of 65 combined cases in the three onsite counties (39 foster care cases and 26 in-home services cases). In addition to the case reviews, interviews and focus groups were conducted. The state's performance was assessed on seven outcomes related to safety, permanency and well-being, as well as seven systemic factors. The report indicated that California did not achieve substantial conformity with any of the seven outcome areas. According to the report:

The results of the case reviews show that Permanency Outcome 1 (Children have permanency and stability in their living situations) was substantially achieved in only 41.0 of the cases reviewed and Well-Being Outcomes 1 (Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs) was substantially achieved in only 58.5 percent of the cases. Although the State did

not achieve substantial conformity with any of the outcomes, the State performed at a higher level on the following outcomes:

- Safety Outcome 1 (Children are first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect) – 80.6 percent of cases substantially achieved this outcome.
- Safety Outcome 2 (Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate) – 76.9 percent of the cases substantially achieved this outcome.
- Permanency Outcome 2 (Continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children) – 79.5 percent of the cases substantially achieved this outcome.
- Well-Being Outcome 2 (Children receive services to meet their educational needs) – 88.0 percent of the cases substantially achieved this outcome.

The areas of concern included recurrence of maltreatment and the four composites related to permanency.

For the seven systemic factors, California was found to be in substantial conformity in the following: Statewide Information System, Quality Assurance System, and Agency Responsiveness to Community. The four areas the State did not achieve substantial conformity are Case Review System, Training, Service Array, and Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing Recruitment, and Retention.

On April 15, 2008, CDSS held a public Program Improvement Plan Development Kick-Off Meeting to review California's process to date and share strengths and probable shortcomings as identified in the statewide assessment, onsite reviews and stakeholder interviews, and the federal government's exit conference remarks.

Following the morning Kick-Off convening, the CFSR Steering Committee met. The committee is co-chaired by Greg Rose, Acting Deputy Director of the CDSS Children and Family Services Division and Charlene Reid, Children's Committee Child Welfare Directors Association. Membership is representative child welfare stakeholders across California including courts, youth, tribes and probations. The 32 committee members, with assistance from the National Resource Centers, identified primary strategies to be addressed in the Program Improvement Plan. The five proposed strategies are: 1) Expand use of participatory case planning; 2) Sustain and expand permanency efforts across the life of the case; 3) Enhance and expand caregiver recruitment, training and support efforts; 4) Expand options and create flexibility for services and supports to meet the needs of children and families; and 5) Sustain and expand staff/supervisor training. As indicated in the CFSR Final Report, the state will need to develop an additional strategy to address concerns related to Safety Outcome 2.

The CFSR Steering Committee will convene throughout the summer to develop a PIP which is due to Region IX on September 8, 2008.



# **California's Child Welfare Services System: Overview**

## **California's Child Welfare Services System: Overview**

California's state-supervised child welfare system is administered at the local level by 58 counties, each governed by a county board of supervisors. While there are challenges inherent in the complexity of this type of system, its central strength lies in the flexibility afforded each county to determine how best to meet the needs of its own children and families. As the most populous state in the country, California's rich culture and ethnic diversity includes 224 languages and, according to the Department of the Interior, 106 federally recognized Indian tribes (and an estimated 40-50 non-federally recognized tribes). The state's counties differ widely by population; economic base; mix of urban, rural and suburban settings; and topographies that span desert, forest, mountain, coastal and inland valley formations. Within a single statutory and regulatory framework, these counties are charged with providing the full array of services necessary to meet the needs of at-risk children and families.

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS), via its Children and Family Services Division (CFSD), is the agency authorized by statute to promulgate regulations, policies and procedures necessary to implement the state's child welfare services (CWS) system and to ensure safety, permanency and well-being for California's children. The CDSS is responsible for the supervision and coordination of programs in California funded under federal Titles IV-B, IV-E, and XX of the Social Security Act. Furthermore, the CDSS is responsible for developing the state's Child and Family Services Plan. These efforts are all achieved within a framework of collaboration with child welfare stakeholders. Due to its complexity and this high degree of collaboration, California's child welfare system is ever-changing as it seeks to improve its ability to meet the needs of the state's children and families.

The CFSD plays a vital role in the development of policies and programs that implement the goals of the CDSS' mission. Oversight of the state's CWS system is the responsibility of the CFSD. In developing policies and programs, the CFSD collaborates with other state and local agencies, tribal representatives, foster/kinship caregivers, foster youth, foster care service providers, community-based organizations, the Judicial Council, researchers, child advocates, the Legislature and private foundations to maximize families' opportunities for success.

### **Child Welfare Services (CWS) System**

The CWS system is the primary intervention resource for child abuse and neglect in California. Existing law provides for child welfare services which are directed toward the accomplishment of the following purposes: protecting and promoting the welfare of all children, including handicapped, homeless and dependent children; preventing, remedying or assisting in the resolution of problems that contribute to the exploitation or delinquency of children; preventing the unnecessary separation of children from their families where the removal of the child(ren) can be prevented by identifying family needs; assisting families in resolving those issues that lead to child abuse and neglect; reunifying families whose children have been removed, whenever possible by providing necessary services to the children and their families; maintaining family connections, when removal cannot be prevented, by identifying children for whom tribal placement and relative placement are preferred and most

appropriate, and finally, assuring permanence for dependent children, who cannot be returned home, by promoting the timely adoption, guardianship or alternative permanent placement for these children.

Oversight of California's CWS system is provided by the various branches of the CDSS/CFSD Division:

- The Child Protection and Family Support Branch has primary responsibility for the emergency response; pre-placement and in-home services policy components, including child abuse prevention and the Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration projects, as well as statewide training and staff development activities of public child welfare service workers. In addition, a wide range of community-based services, including child abuse prevention, and intervention and treatment services that are designed to increase family strengths and capacity to provide children with a stable and supportive family environment, are funded under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP), Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention & Treatment (CAPIT) and the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Act, which are administered in the Branch.
- The Children Services Operations and Evaluation Branch is responsible for maintaining the integrity of child and family services by monitoring the uniform implementation of laws and regulations governing the provision of child welfare services by the 58 California counties. In addition, this branch has primary responsibility for the implementation of the CWS System Improvements; the C-CFSR; adoption assistance program policy; coordinating child welfare and probation disaster plans; ensuring interstate placements are in compliance with the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children and the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance; oversight of county compliance with relative approval requirements; the review of child fatality/near fatality statements of findings submitted by counties; operating state Adoption District Offices and reviewing, maintaining, managing and ensuring the confidentiality of all California adoption records and providing post-adoption services.
- The Child and Youth Permanency Branch supervises the delivery of services to children removed from their homes and placed into foster, kinship, adoptive or guardian families. The branch responsibilities include program management through regulation development and policy directives related to out-of-home care and permanency for dependent children; Independent Living Program; the implementation of the Family to Family Program; and foster parent training and recruitment.
- The Case Management System Support Branch is responsible for providing support and oversight of the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS). The CWS/CMS is a personal computer (PC)-based Windows™ application that supports the case management business needs of California's child welfare social workers. As the CDSS' primary point of contact for CWS/CMS, this branch is responsible for facilitating the development of CWS programmatic changes and improvements to the system, pursuant to state and federal policy and regulation. The

branch also works closely with the counties to assure programmatic consistency and clarity, and to respond to collective county questions regarding system issues as they relate to state policy.

- The Foster Care Audits and Rates Branch is responsible for ensuring that children placed into foster care in group homes and by foster family agencies are receiving the services for which providers are being paid; that provider payment levels are established appropriately; that overpayments are minimized and that federal, state and county payment and funding systems are appropriately administered. In addition, this branch provides policy direction with regards to foster care eligibility, administration of the Title IV-E Plan and conducts a variety of audits for the purpose of determining whether foster care funds are being used appropriately.
- The Foster Care Ombudsman's Office provides foster children and youth or concerned adults with a forum for voicing concerns regarding the Foster Care system's services, treatment, and placement. This office provides a central statewide clearinghouse and technical assistance for county child welfare Ombudsman offices, and coordinates with them to address concerns related to foster youth in their county and provides direct outreach to foster youth who may be experiencing problems with their care providers or county workers.

The following major components comprise the CWS system:

Prevention: service delivery and family engagement processes designed to mitigate the circumstances leading to child maltreatment before it occurs.

Emergency Response: a response system designed to provide in-person 24-hours-a-day response to reports of abuse, neglect or exploitation for the purpose of investigation; to determine the necessity for providing initial intake services and crisis intervention to maintain the child safely in his/her own home or to protect the safety of the child through emergency removal and foster care placement.

Family Maintenance: time-limited services that are designed to provide in-home protective services to prevent or remedy neglect, abuse or exploitation for the purpose of preventing the separation of children from their families.

Family Preservation: intensive services for families whose children, without such services, would be subject to risk of out-of-home placement; would remain in existing out-of-home placements for longer periods of time or would be placed in a more restrictive out-of-home placement.

Family Reunification: time-limited services to children in out-of-home care to prevent or remedy neglect, abuse or exploitation when the child cannot remain safely at home and needs temporary foster care while services are provided to reunite the family.

Permanent Placement: alternative family structures for children who, because of abuse, neglect or exploitation cannot remain safely at home and/or who are unlikely ever to return home. These services are provided when there has been a judicial determination of a

permanent plan for adoption, legal guardianship (including the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment [KinGAP] Program), an independent living arrangement for adolescent children or other alternative permanent placement.

When adoption is the permanent plan for a child, the potential adoptive family is home studied, and approved before the child is placed with the family. Services include recruitment of potential adoptive parents; financial assistance to adoptive parents to aid in the support of special needs children; direct relinquishment and independent adoption.

Independent Living: education and services for foster youth based on an assessment of needs and designed to help youth transition successfully from foster care to living independently. Services are provided to enhance necessary basic living skills, as well as career development skills.

**PIP Outcome:  
Safety**

## **Safety**

Safety for children is an important part of the state's vision for children and families and a measurable outcome of the state's child welfare services (CWS) system. California strives to ensure that children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect and that they are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

### **Child Safety Outcomes**

Over the last two decades, California has experienced high numbers of child abuse reports that have grown increasingly complex and challenging to the CWS system's capacity to effectively respond. The complexity of the issues facing child welfare families reaches beyond the CWS system's ability to handle alone and requires participation by other partners who have responsibility in these same areas. Thus, the emphasis of the CDSS herein is on system reform and collaborative action.

For the purposes of this APSR, the program improvement goals from the prior year report have been identified as objectives and cover the period from July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008.

#### **OBJECTIVE 1: The State's objective is to reach the target of 8.9% in the rate of repeat maltreatment of children. (Safety Outcome 1, Item 2A.)**

California met the improvement goal of 8.9% as reported in the previous APSR of Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2005. The CDSS remains committed to further improvements in this objective and continues to measure progress in this area. As of the 12-month period ending September 2007, this measure is 7.2% (based on the CFSR data profile issued March 2008). This continues to be an improvement as evidence by the continued-decrease.

Thirty-four of California's 58 counties have implemented Differential Response (DR). Some counties were able to provide data about the implementation of DR and the impact on repeat maltreatment. Counties that have implemented DR have already been able to see positive results. One of the 11 pilot counties provided data reflecting a decrease in the recurrence of maltreatment within 6 months of a prior substantiated referral of abuse or neglect for children 0-5 years since the implementation of DR. In July 2004-June 2005 the recurrence rate for maltreatment in that county was 14.5%. DR was implemented in September 2005. In July 2006-July 2007 the recurrence rate for maltreatment was 5.0%. The recurrence of maltreatment within 6 months of a prior substantiated referral of abuse or neglect for all children has also declined since the implementation of DR.

#### **OBJECTIVE 2: The State's objective is to decrease two percentage points in the rate of recurrence of abuse or neglect in cases where children are not removed from the home. (Safety Outcome 2, Items 3 & 4.)**

This objective has been met and is no longer being tracked.

**OBJECTIVE 3: The State's objective is to reach the target of 0.58% in the data indicator for child abuse or neglect in foster care based on the existing data indicator. (Safety Outcome 1, Item 2B.)**

According to the new federal measures, abuse in out-of-home care should reach a target of .32%, which is the national standard. This is lower than the past revised target of .57%, as approved by Region IX in 2005. As of September 2007, California's abuse in out-of-home care was measured at .29%. Using this data, the state has passed this measure.

California now tracks the new measure related to maltreatment in foster care. With the most recent data submitted for the data profile issued July 2008, California has met the national standard for this measure on the new measure used in round two of the CFSR. While the reason for this improvement cannot be tied to any single strategy, it is most likely that this improvement is related to a combination of efforts which have increased the percentage of relative placements and decreased the percentage of group home placements.

**Benchmarks:**

**By June 30, 2006, CDSS will, based on the experience of the 11 counties, make recommendations to the Administration and Legislature via the State budget process regarding phasing in additional counties to begin implementation of the Standardized Safety Assessment System.**

This benchmark has been met

**By June 30, 2006, CDSS will report, in the Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR), its findings and plans for the appropriate next steps regarding the phasing in of additional counties to begin implementation of the Standardized Safety Assessment System or the elimination of this strategy to achieve the objectives for this goal.**

This benchmark has been met.

**By June 30, 2006, CDSS will, based on the experience of the total participating counties, and the approval of the Administration and Legislature via the State budget process, begin phasing in 15 additional counties to begin implementation of the Standardized Safety Assessment System.**

This benchmark has been met.

**By June 30, 2007, CDSS will, based on the experience of the total participating counties, and the approval of the administration and legislature via the State budget process, begin phasing in 16 additional counties to begin implementation of the Standardized Safety Assessment System.**

This benchmark has been met.



**By June 30, 2008, CDSS will, based on the experience of the total participating counties, and the approval of the administration and legislature via the State budget process, begin phasing in 16 additional counties to begin implementation of the Standardized Safety Assessment System.**

This benchmark has been met. All 58 counties have implemented the Standardized Safety Assessment System countywide by June 30, 2007. Forty-five counties have implemented or are in the process of implementing Structured Decision Making (SDM) and 13 counties have implemented or are in the process of implementing the Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT).

**By June 30, 2009, barring any unforeseen barriers to full implementation, the new Standardized Safety Assessment System will be utilized in all counties in California.**

This benchmark has been met. See above.

**By June 30, 2005, a minimum of 11 counties will have implemented and begun validation of a consistent approach to the assessment of safety, risk, protective capacity and family strengths.**

This benchmark has been met. The CDSS, in collaboration with the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA), determined that the most cost-effective approach to evaluation of the CWS system improvements would be to establish a single evaluation process for the entire pilot. A preliminary evaluation and report was issued in June 2006. A full evaluation was completed February 2008 and can be viewed at:  
<http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/res/pdf/11CountyPilot2008.pdf>

**By June 30, 2005, the CDSS will have established a uniform screening system that utilizes the safety, risk and family protective capacity assessment process, and establishes criteria for each Differential Response path.**

This benchmark has been met.

**By June 30, 2005, each of the 11 counties will have developed the community resource capacity to respond to service referrals in targeted communities.**

This benchmark has been met.

**By June 30, 2005, a minimum of 11 counties will have begun the implementation and validation of the Differential Response Intake Structure in specific, targeted communities.**

This benchmark has been met.

**By January 30, 2006, CDSS will, based on the experience of the 11 counties, have determined and evaluated the factors (cost, statutory and/or regulatory changes, practice changes, resources: staffing/funding/community support, etc.) necessary to implement the Differential Response Intake Structure in additional counties.**

This benchmark has been met.

**By June 30, 2006, CDSS will, based on the evaluation of implementation experience of the 11 counties, make recommendations to the administration and legislature via the State budget process, regarding phasing in additional counties to begin implementation of the Differential Response Intake Structure.**

This benchmark has been met.

**By June 30, 2006, CDSS will report, in the Annual Progress and Services Report, its findings and plans for the appropriate next steps regarding the phasing in of additional counties to begin implementation of the Differential Response Intake Structure or the elimination of this strategy to achieve the objectives for this goal.**

This benchmark has been met.

**By June 30, 2006, if implementation is identified as appropriate and doable, and budgeted in the State Budget, CDSS will begin phasing in an additional 15 counties to implement the Differential Response Intake Structure.**

This benchmark has been met.

**By June 30, 2007, if implementation is identified as appropriate and doable, and budgeted in the State Budget, CDSS will begin phasing in an additional 16 counties to implement the Differential Response Intake Structure.**

This benchmark has been met.

**By June 30, 2008, if implementation is identified as appropriate and doable, CDSS will begin phasing in an additional 16 counties to implement the Differential Response Intake Structure.**

This benchmark has been met. The CDSS requested funding from the Legislature to be able to expand the DR Intake Structure to additional counties in SFY 2006/07. Funding was included in the Governor's budget for SFY 2006/07 for the continued implementation of the DR Intake Structure to additional sites. In SFY 2006/07, 3 additional counties requested to implement DR programs using CWS Outcome Improvement funds. Another 12 counties requested and received funding through CWS Outcome Improvement funds to expand existing DR programs. The 11 pilot counties continued to receive funding for DR, and in the past three years several other counties used a portion of their Outcome Improvement Project (OIP) funds to either implement or enhance DR. Other counties have implemented DR using other funding sources (such as PSSF and grants) but future expansion will depend on available funding.

**By June 30, 2009, barring any unforeseen barriers to implementation; and if budgeted in the State Budget, CDSS will have implemented the Differential Response Intake Structure in all 58 counties**

This benchmark has not been met.

### **Other Efforts**

#### **The State Interagency Team (SIT)**

The purpose of the SIT is to provide leadership and guidance to facilitate implementation of improved systems that benefit the common population of children, youth and families served by SIT agencies. The SIT promotes shared responsibility and accountability for the welfare of children, youth and families by promoting the alignment of planning, funding and policy across state departments and philanthropy.

The SIT has created work groups to achieve several of its objectives, which include the following:

**California Statewide Leadership Group on the Co-occurrence of Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment** The California Statewide Leadership Group on the Co-occurrence of Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment (Leadership Group - formerly known as the Greenbook Project) is a voluntary affiliation of representatives of state and county government and nonprofit agencies representing child welfare, the courts, domestic violence service providers, and related domains including substance abuse, health and mental health, and child abuse prevention, that work with vulnerable families. In its role as a working group of the SIT, the Leadership Group will develop findings and recommendations to the SIT, among other policymakers and constituency groups. The Leadership Group's mission is to ensure that all agencies and community-based groups are working together to make available the most appropriate protection, supports and services to ensure that vulnerable families are not re-victimized by social services, the courts, or the domestic violence agencies designed to serve their interests.

To achieve its mission, the Leadership Group's goal is to identify, define and advance changes needed to support practices that foster the safety and well-being of all members of vulnerable families and their children. Under review are state policy and regulation and other state-level tools, such as data collection, education, professional development and funding.

**The Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Workgroup** is comprised of representatives from the ADP, DHCS, CDPH, DMH, CDSS, CDE, DDS, JC/AOC, and California's First 5 Commission. In 2006, the Work Group results included improving the collection of data on substance abuse by families in the child welfare, health and education systems; and assisting counties in estimating substance abuse treatment needs for child welfare families. They also developed a county survey of AOD screening protocols and tools to determine promising practices and recommendations for improving screening and referral. This survey was presented to the SIT in June 2007. In October 2007, the counties and regional offices that participated in the survey were notified how the survey summary was to be used and how to keep the SIT informed regarding the implementation of the recommendations.

#### 2007 Workgroup Accomplishments:

- Developed a Screening Survey Summary (SSS) report to the SIT with interagency recommendations, which were endorsed by the SIT.
- Developed a SSS Recommendation Implementation Work Plan.
  - Collaboration Accomplishments related to the SSS Recommendations include:  
Agreement on common terms to define AOD Screening;
  - ADP incorporated Student Assistance Programs (SAPs) in its Safe and Drug Free Schools grants;
  - CDE distributed information regarding the February SAP Conference to AOD Work Group agencies to encourage their participation;
  - CDSS is including two AOD screening workshops at the CalWORKS Summit;
  - ADP solicited Work Group Member agencies to promote the services provided through their systems at the 2008 ADP Conference;
  - ADP is making technical assistance contractors available to other systems to provide training for AOD screening.

**The Work Group to Eliminate Disparities** is comprised of representatives from the ADP, DHCS, CDPH, DMH, CDSS, CDE, DDS, JC/AOC, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Their focus for 2008 is addressing racial disproportionality in CWS through their participation as the state level team in the California Disproportionality Project, which is co-sponsored by the CDSS, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and Casey Family Programs through the California Co-Investment Partnership. This initiative will be launched in summer 2008 to include, in addition to the state level team, up to 14 county CWS agencies and their community and interagency partners. As the state level team, the Work Group will develop recommendations to the SIT for policy, practice and cross system changes to reduce the disproportionate representation of children of color in the CWS, as well as to improve outcomes for children and families of color across the state of California.

In October 2007, the *Eliminating Disproportionality and Disparities: CA Disproportionality Project and Family to Family Key Elements & Rating Tool* was drafted and piloted. The tool was finalized in November 2007. While the Tool was finalized in November 2007, the California Disproportionality Project has been delayed. The Project has selected the counties who will be participating in the project and they will meet in early January 2009 to start implementing the project. The Tool will be used then and thus we have not yet seen any outcome changes.

**The Core Indicator Workgroup** has been charged with developing a state enriched core set of indicators of child and family well-being for the California Outcomes and Accountability System. This includes recommendations for the potential use of outcome data from systems other than child welfare, such as health, education, substance abuse treatment, etc. The CDSS is leading the workgroup, and the DHCS, CDPH, DMH, CDE, DDS, and ADP and the JC are participating.

Cross agency indicators will encourage shared accountability for improved outcomes for shared populations. Since various data systems have not been designed to produce outcomes data or to transfer data easily across systems this is a long-term effort, which presents both opportunities and challenges. In 2006 the CDSS, through their contract with

the University of California, Davis, completed an analysis of relevant SIT member agencies' key outcomes, indicator and data systems. With the assistance of appropriate staff from those agencies, the potential for using the data for the Outcomes and Accountability System was discussed, and recommendations were identified, developed and prioritized to the SIT and were pursued during the remainder of 2007.

#### 2007 SIT Department Members Accomplishments:

- DMH collaboration with local probation chiefs in the development of prevention and early intervention guidance materials to reflect the mental health needs of minors involved with local probation departments.
- CWDA and California Mental Health Directors Association (CMHDA) cross training activities that highlights the federal CFSR challenges and identifies potential local MH programs serving children, youth and families in the child welfare system.
- CDMH and CDSS coordination is ensuring that all necessary prevention and early intervention training (P&EI) and orientation are provided to local program managers.

#### 2008 Challenges and Opportunities

The SIT highlighted the challenges and opportunities they see in 2008 and commented that opportunities often emerge from challenges. Several themes appeared in this discussion:

- Diminishing resources, program and service cuts coupled with the ongoing need for services for vulnerable families reinforce the continued importance of coordinating and integrating services; supporting interdepartmental collaboration; and, strengthening workforce development to maximize resources and meet service demands.
- Transitional age youth services need to be better coordinated within and across agencies to avoid duplication and make the best use of resources.
- Client level information sharing to improve services requires the investment of resources, expertise and a commitment to overcome barriers associated with confidentiality.
- Information systems improvements currently underway in the courts, CDSS and other state agencies provide the opportunity to ensure that systems are designed to facilitate data sharing.
- AOD abuse is a crosscutting issue that impacts outcomes in health, mental health, child welfare and education and needs to continue to be tackled.
- Multiple treatment plans for children, youth and families that are served by more than one agency are confusing and counterproductive.
- Leadership support and a multidisciplinary approach are needed to overcome delays in implementing pre-release plans and coordinating reentry programs for youth exiting the state corrections system.
- Succession planning is essential to ensure sustainability of leadership, ongoing efforts and accomplishments during leadership and staff transition.
- Efforts by a number of groups, i.e. Child Welfare Council, Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care, Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership, that are focusing on improving child welfare systems provides the opportunity to coordinate and leverage efforts.

The Work Group Leaders reported the following challenges and opportunities related to achieving the work plan deliverables:

- Changes in program funding, directives and priorities, which challenge interagency coordination. Some changes result in opportunities while others created barriers.
- Work Group members developed good working relationships, learned about the services and programs provided by other agencies and opportunities for collaboration beyond the Work Group focus.
- Unanticipated complexity and work load associated with activities needed to produce deliverables.
- Work Group member turnover and time limitations of department staff.
- Delays associated with bureaucratic processes.

### **Consolidated Home Study**

In July 2003, as part of California's PIP, the CDSS convened a workgroup to develop a proposal for a consolidated home study. This consolidated home study would replace the existing separate processes and requirements for foster care licensing, relative and non-related extended family members' approval and adoption home studies all into a single process, using a single standard for approval. The workgroup included representatives from the CWDA, various counties and CDSS Divisions including Legal Affairs, Community Care Licensing and Children and Family Services.

In May 2004, the workgroup presented a detailed framework for a proposed consolidated home study to CWDA and CDSS. After consideration, both organizations agreed to further develop the proposal and to address some of the more difficult aspects: costs, staffing qualifications, conflict of interest, treatment of existing licensees, due process, etc. The joint CWDA/CDSS workgroup convened in May 2005 to discuss proceeding with a legislative proposal for authority to pilot a consolidated home study process.

In June 2005, CDSS renegotiated this PIP Action Step timetable and desired results with federal representatives and agreed to continue working with CWDA to forward a legislative proposal to implement a consolidated home study pilot. CDSS also reviewed existing county efforts to integrate the existing separate licensing/approval processes and requirements.

In 2006, AB 2161 was introduced in the Legislature. This bill requires CDSS, in consultation with stakeholders and other interested parties, to develop and implement a pilot program in up to five counties to establish a resource family approval process that would replace the existing separate and duplicative processes for licensing foster family homes, approving relatives and non-related extended family members, and approving adoptive families. The bill passed through the policy committees with a long list of supporters and no opposition. The bill died in the Appropriations Committee.

During much of 2006, the joint CDSS/CWDA workgroup met monthly to develop in greater detail the requirements of the proposed pilot program.

In October 2007, AB 340 (Chapter 464, Statutes of 2007) was signed into law authorizing the CDSS, in consultation with county welfare agencies, stakeholders and interested parties, to

implement a three-year pilot program to establish a unified, family-friendly and child-centered resource family approval process in up to five counties. In January 2008, DOJ established the project code for the pilot.

In December 2007, the joint CDSS/CWDA workgroup convened to establish the implementation phase of the pilot program. The implementation phase began with the county selection process. In January 2008, the joint CDSS/CWDA workgroup established the terms and conditions and county selection criteria. The workgroup is developing an All County Information Letter, Letter of Intent, and a request for program concept papers/statement of qualifications from county welfare agencies wishing to participate on a voluntary basis in this pilot program. Up to five counties will be selected to participate. Those selected counties will be asked to submit a Comprehensive Implementation Plan.

The anticipated date to select counties is July 2008. Once counties are selected to participate, they will be trained and provided the necessary resources to implement the pilot. The anticipated program date of implementation is October 1, 2008.

### **Child Abuse Prevention Month 2008**

One of OCAP's most popular activities is the "Kids Day at the Capitol" event held at the State Capitol. Each year OCAP starts planning for the next year's Child Abuse Prevention Month activities almost immediately following the current year's activities. Kids Day continues to grow and expand, each year becoming the highlight of Child Abuse Prevention Month in California. American Sign Language is incorporated throughout the presentations.

Kids Day is done in collaboration with Prevent Child Abuse California and the CDSS Public Affairs Office. The event is advertised a few months in advance. There were approximately 1,500 people that attended, including children, parents, teachers, and community child abuse prevention professionals. As in the past, each county's local Child Abuse Prevention Councils (CAPC), as well as programs throughout California, are invited to showcase what they do and share information. Each year's activities are to include:

- Recognition speeches by legislators, Department of Social Services Director, community-based organizations and child abuse prevention advocates.
- Entertainment and other fun activities for children such as:
  1. Chipper—California Highway Patrol  
<http://www.chp.ca.gov/community/pdf/ChipPals.pdf>
  2. McGruff—Attorney General's Office  
<http://www.mcgruff.org>
  3. Slamson—from the Sacramento Kings  
[http://www.nba.com/kings/kids/slamson\\_bio000204.html](http://www.nba.com/kings/kids/slamson_bio000204.html)
  4. Hoola hoop dancing, using a skilled entertainer that works with kids.
- An Exhibition Expo for agencies to disseminate information regarding their child abuse prevention programs and services.

- A “Heroes for Kids Art Contest” display with awards going to the winners, publicly acknowledging their artwork. Tours of the Capitol, museums, games, and activities for the children is also offered throughout the morning and early afternoon.
- A key note speaker is invited to highlight an issue related to child abuse prevention.
- Prior to each event, CDSS designs Public Service Announcements for distribution to the communities, which assists their public awareness campaigns.
- Local public agencies, such as fire stations, police, and other state agencies are invited to have a booth.
- Local businesses willingly volunteer to contribute items, such as snacks for the kids.

CDSS/OCAP continues to highlight child abuse prevention at the State Capitol, where local CAPCs, FRCs, and agencies throughout the state can participate in raising awareness about child abuse and neglect.



**PIP Outcome:  
Permanence**

## Permanence

Permanence for children is one of California's primary goals; specifically, permanence in a home in which the child is safe and can grow into a healthy stable adult. The state of California and the CDSS are committed to ensuring that children have permanence and stability in their living situations, continuity of family relationships and on-going connections to family, friends, community and racial heritage. Further, the CDSS is dedicated to ensuring that, for children who cannot remain safely in their homes, reunification, adoption, guardianship, alternative permanent placement or transition from foster care to independent living occurs in a timely manner.

**Objective 1: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) target of decreasing the rate of children re-entering foster care within 12 months of reunification to 9.4%. (PIP Permanency Outcome 1, Item 5.)**

**By June 30, 2009, the State will achieve a minimum statewide improvement over June 2004 data of 3.43 percentage points or better, in the rate of children re-entering foster care within 12 months of reunification.**

Re-entry into Foster Care within 12 months of a previous placement episode is an area that has continued to show little movement over the course of the PIP despite practice and resource improvements. CDSS has been formally notified that California will be penalized for failing to meet this PIP target due to its 9.7% performance at PIP closeout. The state will continue to focus on this performance area in the development of its round two CFSR PIP.

**Objective 2: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase the percentage of children who have two or fewer foster care placements in the first year of their latest removal by 3.8 percentage points. (PIP Permanency Outcome 1, Item 6.) By June 30, 2009, the State will achieve a minimum statewide improvement over June 2004 data of 3.73 percentage points or better, in the percentage of children who have two or fewer foster care placements in the first year of their latest removal.**

The state has asserted that we successfully reduced the rate of children re-entering the foster care system.

To officially recognize this improvement for purposes of the PIP, this must be verified by the corrected November AFCARS report. Therefore, the state has requested approval from our Regional Office for this methodology and to change our November AFCARS submission to accurately report California's data. Revised AFCARS data was submitted by the state yet neither this item nor the re-entry rate achieved our PIP target.

On January 4, 2008, the state received a notice of PIP penalty for "failure to successfully complete all the requirements of its approved PIP, pursuant to 45 CFR 1355.36(e). While the state is currently appealing that decision to the federal Departmental Appeals Board, it will continue to focus on these Permanency areas as it develops its round two PIP.

**Objective 3: The State's objective is to reach the PIP target to improve the timely establishment of appropriate permanency goals from 70.4%. (PIP Permanency Outcome 1, Item 7.)**

This objective has been met. California met the improvement goal of 70.4% as reported in the APSR of FFY2005. The most recent data for the year ending March 31, 2007 indicates that we are at 84%, which demonstrates steady improvement in the measure. The continued improvement in timeliness of adoption planning is contributing to this improvement.

**Objective 4: By June 30, 2009, the State's objective is to achieve a minimum statewide improvement over June 2004 data of 2.88 percentage points or better, in the proportion of children who exited to reunification and did so within 12 months of the latest removal. (PIP Permanency Outcome 1, Item 8.)**

This objective has been met. California met the PIP objective in this area on December 2003. The most recent data for the year ending March 31, 2007 indicates that we are currently at 70.5% which indicates a steady improvement in the measure and up from 68.9% from the prior APSR reporting period.

**Objective 5: By June 30, 2009, the State has set an overall objective of a minimum statewide improvement over June 2004 data of 1.34 percentage points or better, in proportion of children who exited to adoption and did so within 24 months. (PIP Permanency Outcome 1, Item 9.)**

This objective has been met. California met the PIP objective in this area on December 2003. The most recent data for the year ending March 31, 2007 indicates that we are at 32.6%, a steady improvement in the measure and up from 30.3% reported during the prior APSR.

**Objective 6: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to reduce the proportion of children with a goal of long-term foster care at two years after entry to 31.3%. (PIP Permanency Outcome 1, Item 10.)**

This objective has been met. California met the improvement goal of 31.3% as reported in the APSR of FFY 2005. The most recent data for the year ending March 31, 2007 indicates that we are at 15.4%, a continued improvement in this measure.

**Objective 7: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase from the baseline survey by three percentage points, the percentage of children whose primary connections are preserved. (PIP Permanency Outcome 2, Item 14.)**

This objective has been met. The PIP survey will continue to be administered and the results will inform our efforts to improve well-being outcomes. The survey was administered during the second quarter of 2008; however, the analysis of the data has not been completed. Due to the California budget issues, temporary staff responsible for analyzing survey data has

been permanently released from their employment with CDSS. It is unknown when the analysis of the data can be done.

**Objective 8: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target that Family to Family (see glossary) will be available in those counties whose caseload combined represents 60% of the CWS caseload statewide. (PIP Systemic Factor 2, Item 25.)**

California met the improvement goal for this systemic factor. The CDSS remains committed to further improvements in this area and will continue to measure progress. Currently, the 25 counties involved in the Family to Family Program capture roughly 86% of California's foster children, which is well above the State's objective. This high percentage rate can be attributed to a successful reputation the Annie E. Casey Foundation has built as a pioneer in systemic change of child welfare policies and procedures. As well, the Foundation has generously granted Family to Family counties funding in the planning, implementation, and self-evaluation phases of program development.

Twenty-four out of the 25 counties implementing F2F are in various stages of implementation of all four core strategies: recruitment, development and support, building community partnerships, team decision making, and self-evaluation. Santa Cruz, the latest county to participate in F2F, is still in the planning stage of implementation. Since F2F is tailored to the needs of each county, counties determine how each strategy will be implemented. Outcome measures related to each of the core strategies are currently being developed, and an evaluation is in progress.

Beginning in SFY 04/05, a 3-year, 11-county pilot was funded to test family engagement strategies. An evaluation was released in 2008 which found that in comparison to non-pilot counties

- Pilot counties showed greater improvement in the rate at which children were reunified with their parents within 12 months. (30 percent improvement versus three percent improvement).
- Foster care reentry rates increased by only 1.5 percent, supporting the conclusion that children are being returned home safely.
- In pilot counties a greater percentage of adoptions occurred within 24 months. (19 percent in pilot counties; 10 percent in non-pilot counties)
- In pilot counties the percentage of children initially placed with relatives increased by 12 percent, while initial placements with relatives in non-pilot counties decreased by two percent.

Technical support is provided by the Foundation and the CDSS, to assist in the barriers counties have experienced in sustaining the program. Convenings, county-specific trainings, data analysis and interpretation, sharing of best practices and procedures, networking, web based reports and data gathering software development are just a few supportive measures provided by the Foundation. The California Family to Family website can be found at

[www.f2f.ca.gov](http://www.f2f.ca.gov) and serves as an information resource for anyone interested in California's Family to Family program. Lastly, the Family to Family goals and objectives match the AB 636 requirements and, therefore, are used in county SIPs.

**Objective 9: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to decrease the proportion of children in care for 17 of the most recent 22 months without a Termination of Parental Rights (TPR), by 2%. (PIP Systemic Factor 2, Item 28.)**

This objective has been met.

### **Benchmarks**

**By June 30, 2005, the CDSS will have developed and implemented quality case planning and service delivery protocols that include team-based approaches to promote family engagement, such as team decision-making, family conferencing, etc., for targeted cases in each of the 11 pilot counties.**

**By June 30, 2005, the CDSS, in partnership with the 11 pilot counties, will have developed and implemented protocols to include children and youth in case and transition planning.**

These benchmarks have been met.

**By June 30, 2006, CDSS will, based on the experience of the total participating counties, begin phasing in an additional 15 counties to implement the quality case planning and service delivery protocols.**

This benchmark has been met.

**By June 30, 2007, CDSS will, based on the experience of the total participating counties, add an additional 16 counties to begin implementation of the quality case planning and service delivery protocols.**

This benchmark has been met.

**By June 30, 2008, CDSS will, based on the experience of the total participating counties, add an additional 16 counties to begin implementation of the quality case planning and service delivery protocols that include team-based approaches to promote family engagement, such as team decision-making, family conferencing, etc.**

Funding to phase in an additional 16 counties is not available, so this benchmark will not be achieved. However, this is targeted as an area needing improvement in the state's PIP for Round 2 of the CFSR.

**By June 30, 2009, CDSS will have implemented the quality case planning and service delivery protocols in all 58 counties.**

## **Other Efforts**

### **The Family to Family Initiative**

The California Family to Family Initiative is an opportunity to reconceptualize, redesign and improve the state's child welfare systems and is comprised of a partnership between the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Stuart Foundation, Casey Family Programs, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, and the CDSS. Family to Family consists of four core strategies, including: 1) recruitment, development, and support of resource families, 2) building community partnerships, 3) team decision making, and 4) self-evaluation. The strategies support birth and resource families by improving safety of placements when removal is necessary and by having the families participate in making decisions about their lives.

The Family to Family Initiative is in various phases of implementation throughout California. There are currently 25 counties participating in the initiative, which capture roughly 86% of the foster children in care. Presently, all Family to Family counties have successfully implemented Team Decision Making meetings, excluding Santa Cruz County, as the county is in the planning phase of program development. Individual Family to Family counties determine when Team Decision Meetings will be held to best meet the needs of their county. Team Decision Making meetings were held in counties for intake, risk of removal, emergency placement, placement preservation/changes, and exit from placement/reunification. The majority of the Family to Family counties are moving toward including emancipation interviews as part of the TDM process.

### **Judicial Review and Technical Assistance (JRTA)**

Technical assistance is provided for judges, referees, commissioners, court clerks, probation and county welfare department staff on Title IV-E Foster Care requirements. The JRTA staff consists of 5.5 positions, including a supervising attorney. JRTA staff attends all quarterly project planning sessions and project updates with CDSS. JRTA staff participates in meeting with county welfare departments and county probation department staff as appropriate which consists of discussing promising practices in permanency issues, such as: finding life-long connections for youth, engaging youth in dependency process, concurrent planning, and prioritizing permanency for youth, ADR methods, Family to Family models, termination of parental rights and adoption.

The JRTA attorneys continue to provide technical assistance and training related to permanency through continued research, development of curriculum and maintaining relationships with local, state and national experts. Future technical assistance and training will focus on working collaboratively with dependency and delinquency court judges and county agencies in the areas of ILP, transitional housing and finding connections for foster youth. In addition to expanding these services to delinquency court system stakeholders, they will be made available statewide as resources permit.

## **The Judicial Council of California's Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Initiative**

Effective December 2005, the CDSS entered into an interagency agreement with the AOC Center for Children and Families to create the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Initiative. The initiative is currently funded from 2007 through 2010. The initiative was created because Indian children continue to be removed from their families and tribal communities and placed with non-Indian caregivers. While juvenile court judges and placing agency staff have received some training on ICWA, this initiative presents an opportunity to provide targeted training and technical assistance in order to increase knowledge of ICWA by making available a range of facilitation and training services through cross-disciplinary regional and locally targeted trainings for judicial officers, clerks, attorneys, social workers and probation officers. Services are tailored to the needs of the local court system or region. As part of this initiative, educational materials addressing the federal requirements under the ICWA have been developed. These materials include charts, agency checklists on notice procedures and case planning, a judicial handbook, descriptions of available services to Indian children and families and a qualified ICWA expert witness list.

SB 678 (Chapter 838, Statutes of 2006) revised and recast the portions of the Family, Probate, and Welfare and Institutions Codes that address Indian child custody proceedings by codifying into state law various provisions of the federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), the Bureau of Indian Affairs Guidelines for State Courts, and state Rules of Court. Specifically, this bill (1) affirmed the state's interest in protecting Indian children and the child's interest in having tribal membership and a connection to the tribal community, (2) clarified that ICWA applies to certain proceedings under the Probate and Family Codes, as well as the Welfare and Institutions Code, (3) specified the requirements necessary for giving proper notice when it is known or there is reason to know that a proceeding involves an Indian child, (4) if the child has more than one tribal affiliation, clarified the factors a court should consider when determining which tribe is the child's tribe for purposes of an Indian child custody proceeding, (5) specified the circumstances under which a proceeding shall or may be transferred to a tribal court, (6) clarified the placement preferences for out-of-home placements for Indian children and when a court may deviate from the preferences, (7) required that active efforts be made to prevent the breakup of the Indian family and provide guidance as to what constitutes active efforts, (8) clarified who may qualify as a "qualified expert witness" for purposes of testifying whether continued custody of the parent would result in physical or emotional damage to the Indian child, and (9) established specified exceptions to the termination of parental rights to an Indian child.

With the passage of SB 678, the ICWA Initiative staff has developed training materials to educate court personnel in the juvenile, family, and probate court systems about the impact of the new law. Also, in light of SB 678, the ICWA Initiative staff worked with the AOC Center for Judicial Education and Research (CJER) Division to update the ICWA Bench Handbook with citations to the new statutory provisions. The Revised ICWA Handbook is available to judicial officers online in Serranus and it is posted on their website.

Educational workshops have been provided by a broad-based group of subject matter experts on a statewide, regional and local basis. The ICWA initiative continues to impact, not only the preservation of connections for Indian children, but also achieving permanency, as defined by the Indian community.

The ICWA Initiative staff has completed the following trainings and presentations:

- January 16, 2008, an ICWA training in Tehama County.
- January 28, 2008, an ICWA presentation at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual San Diego International conference on Child and Family Maltreatment
- January 31, 2008, conducted “Nuts and Bolts of the Indian Child Welfare Act” training in conjunction with a “Permanency Planning for Foster Youth in Care” workshop.
- February 15, 2008, participated in an ICWA training in Humboldt County.
- February 25 and 27, 2008 conducted ICWA training primarily for probation officers in Monterey.
- March 11, 2008, conducted an ICWA training in San Bernardino.

As with each of the regional trainings, a resource binder was created for participants and has been made available on CD and posted on the Judicial Council’s web site located at:

<http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/programs/description/jrta-ICWAResourceBinder.html>

The ICWA Initiative staff organized and developed the content for an ICWA broadcast for court clerks and court personnel. They also conducted a live broadcast on “ICWA 101” in April 2008; trainings for LA County and Santa Clara County probation officers; an ICWA collaborative training in Mendocino County; and an ICWA session for rural judges at the Cow County Institute in May 2008.

The ICWA Initiative staff developed and distributed guides for:

- ICWA Requirements for Social Work Departments.
- ICWA Requirements for Probation Departments.
- Findings and Orders for Probate Guardianship cases involving Indian Children.
- Findings and Orders for Juvenile cases involving Indian Children.

The ICWA Initiative staff is in the process of developing a toolkit, for statewide distribution, to encourage and assist those wishing to establish a local court-tribal-county collaboration by sharing the promising practices developed by local collaborations in California.

On December 12, 2007, as part of the Beyond the Bench Conference, ICWA Initiative staff conducted an ICWA pre-conference session that was part of the all-day workshop for judicial officers called “Juvenile Law Issues for Judicial Officers.” Additionally, two other ICWA workshops were offered: “Avoiding Reversals in Delinquency and Dependency Cases under the Indian Child Welfare Act,” and “Courts, Tribes, and Child Welfare: Improving the System.”

Quarterly reports are submitted to CDSS within 30 calendar days after the end of each quarter, which are based on the State’s fiscal year—July 1 through June 30. Annual reports are also submitted to CDSS within 30 calendar days after the end of each fiscal year for the first two years. These reports summarize all activities for the fiscal year.

The effectiveness of the ICWA Initiative is difficult to measure at this point as it is challenging to attribute improvements in outcomes for Indian children to the activities of the Initiative. However, we are expecting that the invaluable work products (the ICWA Bench Handbook,



the Legal Job Aids, and the Clearinghouse of Native Resources, etc.) that have been produced, along with the trainings provided, as noted herein, will be recognized and used by workers at all levels as tools to improve outcomes for Indian children and families. CDSS is working with the AOC ICWA Initiative staff to develop an ACIN to more widely distribute this noteworthy and useful information.

### **Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP)**

The Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP) was originally limited to 11 counties until legislation enacted in FY 2006/07 changed participation requirements to expand county participation. Following a funding augmentation of \$2.5 million in SFY 2006/07, the Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP) has increased the number of counties receiving funds to 27 counties. This funding was allocated via application submitted by counties wanting to start-up or continue operating a Kinship Support Services Program. The KSSP provides services to relative caregivers that are aimed at helping to ensure permanent family kinship placements for children who have been placed with them by the juvenile court and to provide family support services that will eliminate the need for juvenile court jurisdiction and the provision of services by the county welfare department. Services may also be provided to caregivers of children who are at risk of juvenile court dependency and to caregivers of children voluntarily placed with them. The primary purpose of KSSP is to provide support services to relative caregivers of vulnerable children to increase stability and permanence without child welfare intervention.

Statutorily mandated outcome improvement goals must include, but are not limited to: moving children out of foster care through California's subsidized relative guardianship program or adoption; supporting placement stability; and, prevention of a child entering foster care. Counties may also identify additional goals and activities/service provision in support of any additional goals to meet the unique needs of its relative caregiver population.

Following passage of AB 1808 (Chapter 75, Statutes of 2006), CDSS modified its KSSP-related procedures requiring participating counties to develop a self-identified plan of service provision and activities to focus on each of the three statutorily required outcome improvement goals at the beginning of each FY. However, KSSP-specific outcome data is not collected.

Counties are required to report twice a year on identified activities. Individual county outcomes are reported through California's Outcome and Accountability System.

### **Funds to Hire Additional Adoption Caseworkers**

Because of adoptions process timelines and data reporting timeframes, the state does not anticipate that the increased number of additional completed adoptions annually will be reflected in statewide statistics until at least July of 2008. Additionally, funding has also been made available for a three-year project to achieve increased adoptions of children who are age nine and older and not placed with a relative. Assembly Bill (AB) 1808 (Committee on Budget), Chapter 75, Statutes of 2006 specified that Los Angeles and San Francisco Counties, a state Adoptions District Office (serving multiple counties) and two additional counties were to be selected by CDSS. Alameda and Kern counties have been selected. This project is referred to as the Older Youth Adoption Project. The project has flexibility with regard to what services each project offers. The thematic goals are child specific recruitment,

family finding, and supportive services for the youth and adopting family to help maintain stable placements.

### **The California Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care**

The California Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care was established by the Judicial Council as a high level, multidisciplinary body to provide leadership and recommendations on how courts and their partners can improve safety, permanency, well-being and fairness outcomes. The Blue Ribbon Commission seeks to improve court performance and accountability, to improve collaboration between courts and child welfare agencies, and to address the need for adequate and flexible funding. Appointed by Chief Justice Ronald M. George, the Commission is chaired by Associate Supreme Court Justice Carlos R. Moreno, who is a foster parent, himself. The representative Commission includes trial, appellate, Supreme Court, and tribal judges and justices, as well as legislators, attorneys, foster youth, community leaders and representatives from CDSS, county social services, education, substance abuse and mental health. The Commission has had a busy year examining the causes and consequences of, and the solutions for, court-based delays, the lack of transitional plans or services for children aging out of the dependency system and obstacles to flexible funding and information sharing. The Commission has also studied the education of children in foster care, court management and collaboration models, including the state's efforts to improve ICWA compliance, and their effects on timely reunification and other permanency options.

The Commission has met quarterly since March 2006, and has held meetings, briefings and hearings with foster youth, parents, representatives of the CDSS ICWA workgroup, caregivers, social workers, CASA, educational representatives and the California Legislature. The Commission worked closely with representatives from CDSS and the Center for Social Services Research to draft quantitative performance measures for the juvenile court. The Commission's draft recommendations were released on March 14, 2008 for a 60-day public comment period and can be found at [www.courtinfo.ca.gov/blueribbon](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/blueribbon). The Commission met in June 2008 to develop a final set of recommendations to present to the Judicial Council at its August meeting. Christopher Wu, of the Administrative Office of the Courts, Center for Families, Children & the Courts, is the Executive Director of the Commission.

### **California Permanency for Youth Project (CPYP)**

California Permanency for Youth Project (CPYP) is a project of the Public Health Institute, started in January 2003 as a result of a five-year grant awarded by the Stuart Foundation. This grant has since been extended through 2009. CPYP's vision is that every youth who enters foster care in California will return home safely or find an alternative lifelong family. CPYP's objectives are:

- To increase awareness among the child welfare agencies and staff, legislators and judicial officers in the state, of the urgent need that older children and youth have for permanency.
- To influence public policy and administrative practices so that they promote permanency.

- To assist fourteen specific counties and the private agencies with which they work to implement new practices to achieve permanency for older children and youth.

The project initially worked with four counties: San Mateo, Alameda, Stanislaus and Monterey to develop programs to achieve permanency for more youth. The project provided these counties with technical assistance over two-and-a-half years to help them develop youth permanency practice in their counties. Each county is now working on the challenge of bringing the youth permanency work to scale so that all county youth have this service available. Each county has developed a youth permanence plan that includes the following target areas: administrative practices, permanency practice, identification of the project target group, staff development, partnerships and involvement of youth in finding their own permanency and integration with other initiatives.

In spring of 2005, CPYP began assisting ten more counties: Contra Costa, Fresno, Humboldt, Kern, Los Angeles (metro north region), Orange, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo and Sonoma. Additional counties are being added in September 2008.

In conjunction with the California Youth Connection (CYC) and the Bay Area Academy, the project supported the development of "Digital Stories" on permanency by current and former foster youth. These DVDs are available from CPYP and can be used in training.

As a part of the development of CPYP, a national convening was held in April 2002 to explore the issues of permanency for youth. Subsequently, national convenings have been held in 2003, 2004 and 2005. In 2006, Casey Family Services took over the national convenings, thus allowing CPYP to focus its resources specifically on the work in California. Reports of the convenings are available on the CPYP website <http://www.cpy.org/index.html>

To measure results, CPYP is gathering data over time from workers in each county on the young people being targeted for youth permanency services. In addition, the project is doing a formative evaluation of each county's implementation process that will inform the child welfare field of strategies for future implementation and change. As soon as these data are available, they will be used to inform the effectiveness of this effort.

### **California Connected By 25 Initiative**

The California Connected by 25 Initiative (CC25) is a F2F initiative designed to assist public child welfare agencies and their communities in building comprehensive transition-aged foster youth supports and services. The initiative is part of a national Connected by 25 work of the Youth Transition Funders Group. There are currently six counties participating in CC25: Fresno, Santa Clara, San Francisco, Stanislaus, Orange, and Humboldt. Solano and Glenn County are expected to join the initiative in the fall of 2008. CC25 counties are assisting in the development of CC25 values, tools, and practices that will be used for building a comprehensive continuum which will improve outcomes for transitioning foster youth. CC25 counties are implementing strategies that can be replicated statewide to improve the adult transition experience of all California's foster care youth in the following areas: K-12 education; Employment/job training/post secondary education; financial competency and asset development; housing; independent living skills programs; personal/social asset development; and permanency

## **Dependency Drug Courts**

Dependency drug courts monitor families who are involved with the child welfare system and for whom substance abuse is a significant issue. These courts oversee compliance with the law, protection and permanency planning for children and therapeutic interventions for individuals with substance abuse problems. In California and in other states, dependency drug courts have been determined to have important positive effects on child welfare case outcomes.

In 2006, UCLA conducted a comparative analysis of dependency drug courts in San Diego, Sacramento and Santa Clara Counties. Consistent with previous research in California and in other states, UCLA's results suggest that dependency drug courts are generally cost-neutral, improve family reunification rates, and reduce foster care reentries. Dependency drug courts do not appear to reduce the time to reunification or short-term foster care costs but are expected to result in significant long-term foster care cost avoidances.

From 2004 to 2006, the CDSS has provided technical assistance and staff support to the Judicial Council's Collaborative Justice Advisory Committee and since 2007 has held full membership on that committee. Along with the AOD, the CDSS planned and executed the 2007 dependency drug court expansion phase in which 20 additional counties received funding.

For SFY 2006/07, \$1.8 million was allocated for the original nine counties (El Dorado, Modoc, Merced, Orange, Sacramento, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz). An additional \$3 million was awarded to eight additional counties through a competitive bid process: (Butte, Lake, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Francisco, San Joaquin and Tehama).

Since the beginning of SFY 2007/08, the dependency drug court general fund appropriation was directed to the AOD with the goal of establishing a closer link between funding and program oversight, however the two departments continue to collaborate with local courts and the JC to expand and demonstrate the effectiveness of dependency drug courts.

## **PIP Outcome: Well-Being**

## Promote the Well-Being of Children and Families

California is committed to the well-being of children and families. To measure progress towards well-being, the following specific outcomes have been established:

- Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
- Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
- Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

The CDSS used a statewide, statistically valid survey that established a baseline performance level for the well-being measures. Three subsequent surveys are being used to measure change from the baseline performance.

**Objective 1: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase by three percentage points, the percentage of children, parents and caregivers whose needs were assessed and who received services to meet those needs. (PIP Well-Being Outcome 1, Item 17.)**

This objective has been met.

**Objective 2: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase by three percentage points, the percent of children, parents and caregivers involved in case planning. (PIP Well-Being Outcome 1, Item 18.)**

**By June 30, 2009, the State's objective is to achieve a minimum statewide improvement over June 2004 data of 0.81 percentage points or better, the percentage of children, parents, and caregivers involved in case planning.**

California met this objective for this measure in 2006. In 2007, California continued to increase the first measure in the percentage of children, parents and caregivers involved in case planning to 93.0%.

**Objective 3: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase by three percentage points the percentage of compliance by workers with planned parent visit schedules; the percentage of parents whose ability to meet their case plan goals was promoted/assisted by social worker visits; and the percentage of parents whose ability to safely parent the in-home child was promoted/assisted by social worker visits. (PIP Well-Being Outcome 1, Item 20.)**

The second statewide survey indicated the state obtained our improvement goal for measures two and three for Item 20, (measures worker visits with parents). The survey also indicated improved performance in the first measure (worker compliance with planned parent visit schedules) for this item, although we had not yet quite met the improvement goal.

As required by the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006, the state of California has included with this document, "an outline of the steps it will take to ensure that 90 percent of children in foster care are visited by their workers on a monthly basis, and that the majority of the visits occur in the residence of the child by October 1, 2011."

**Objective 4: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase by three percentage points, the percent of all children in the home, or in out-of-home placement, who were assessed and received services for educational needs. (PIP Well-Being Outcome 2, Item 21.)**

This objective has been met. The Foster Youth Services Program, created by the California Legislature in 1981 and administered by the California Department of Education, includes 57 county offices of education and served approximately 35,000 foster youth in 2007, with tutoring, counseling, and other educational support services. The Department of Education continues to provide oversight and technical assistance to local educational agencies and compiles participant data in statutorily mandated biannual Foster Youth Services reports. The next FYS report will be issued in 2010 and will provide participant and outcome data for 2008 and 2009. The CDSS will continue to use FYS data as a key measure of California's efforts to meet the educational needs of foster children and youth. The Department of Education continues to expand the FYS program, with additional counties and expanded outreach.

**Objective 5: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase by three percentage points, the percent of all children in the home, or in out-of-home placement, who were assessed and received services for mental health needs. (PIP Well-Being Outcome 3, Item 23.)**

This objective has been met. The PIP survey will continue to be administered and the results will inform our efforts to improve well-being outcomes. The survey was administered during the second quarter of 2008, however, the analysis of the data has not been completed. Due to the California budget issues, temporary staff responsible for analyzing survey data have been released from their employment with CDSS. Until such time that they can return to work, analysis of the data is on hold.

### **Benchmarks**

**By June 30, 2005, CDSS will have developed and implemented quality case planning and service delivery protocols in each of the 11 pilot counties for targeted cases in each county.**

**By June 30, 2005, CDSS, in partnership with the 11 pilot counties, will have developed and implemented protocols to enhance family participation in case planning.**

**By June 30, 2005, CDSS, in partnership with the 11 pilot counties, will have developed and implemented protocols to include children and youth in case and transition planning.**

These benchmarks have all been met.

**By June 30, 2006, the 11 counties will develop strategies for community resource development to better serve children and families in targeted cases.**

This benchmark has been met. As reported previously, as part of the implementation of Differential Response, resources in the community were developed in order to serve the families being referred by CWS.

**By June 30, 2006, CDSS will, based on the experience of the total participating counties, begin phasing in an additional 15 counties to implement the quality case planning and service delivery protocols; the protocols to enhance family participation in case planning; the protocols to include children and youth in case and transition planning; and develop strategies for community resource development to better serve children and families.**

This benchmark has been met.

**By June 30, 2007, CDSS will, based on the experience of the total participating counties, begin phasing in an additional 16 counties to implement the quality case planning and service delivery protocols; the protocols to enhance family participation in case planning; the protocols to include children and youth in case and transition planning; and develop strategies for community resource development to better serve children and families.**

This benchmark has been met.

**By June 30, 2008, CDSS will, based on the experience of the total participating counties, begin phasing in an additional 16 counties to implement the quality case planning and service delivery protocols; the protocols to enhance family participation in case planning; the protocols to include children and youth in case and transition planning; and develop strategies for community resource development to better serve children and families.**

Funding to phase in an additional 16 counties is not available, so this benchmark will not be achieved. However, this is targeted as an area needing improvement in the State's Program improvement Plan for Round 2 of the Child and Family Services Review.

**By June 30, 2009, CDSS will have implemented the quality case planning and service delivery protocols; the protocols to enhance family participation in case planning; the protocols to include children and youth in case and transition planning; and develop strategies for community resource development to better serve children and families in all 58 counties.**

#### **Assessment of Health Needs by Medical Professionals**

Under the Health Care Program for Children in Foster Care, funded through and managed by the CDSS and the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), public health nurses play a crucial role in assessing and meeting the health care needs of children in foster care. Housed within county child welfare services agencies, these nurses provide administrative



case management, which includes examining health records and case files and determining the need for health-related evaluations and services.

When a nurse overseeing a child's medical care identifies unmet healthcare needs, she arranges for and follows up on the provision of services from primary and specialty care physicians and associated health care providers. Using the recommended periodicity schedule of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the individual health needs of each child, each public health nurse determines the need for periodic and interperiodic health assessments that conform to the standards established by the DHCS. These health assessments are conducted by or under the direct supervision of physicians who have met DHCS's standards, and the public health nurses collaborate directly with those physicians and their professional staff to ensure that follow-up care is provided. In addition, as health care professionals, public health nurses serve as consultants to county child welfare services staff and juvenile probation officers on interpreting and carrying out the recommendations of the children's physicians.

The CDSS actively participates in the administration of this program by providing program consultation to county social services and public health nursing staff and by conferring on a regular, scheduled basis with regional nursing staff and statewide program executives. In March 2008, the CDSS co-sponsored a statewide training conference of 300 participating nurses, managers and executive staff. With the exception of CDSS staff, all the speakers were either physicians or nurses.

The CDSS confers, on a quarterly basis, with a subcommittee of the County Mental Health Director's Association to discuss and work to improve program and placement options to meet the needs of foster youth with high level mental health needs. The chair of that subcommittee is a county medical director.

As judicial approval is mandated by California law prior to the administration of psychotropic medications to foster youth, the CDSS collaborates with the judiciary and child psychiatrists to ensure that the necessary processes and protections are in place and current. In 2007, the Governor sponsored AB 1514 (Chapter 120, Statutes of 2007), which expanded those protections and processes to all children in foster care. On April 2, 2008 the Department issued All County Information Notice I- 20-08 to reiterate existing requirements and to clarify data entry procedures regarding psychotropic medications prescribed for dependents and wards in foster care. Preliminary data are now being obtained on the numbers of children for whom parental or judicial consent for the administration of psychotropic medications has been requested. Data entry procedures are being revised to improve statewide consistency and accuracy, and when those revisions have been implemented, the CDSS will issue quarterly reports.

With staff dedicated to this specific purpose, the CDSS has begun to identify protocols for early mental health and developmental assessments for all children entering foster care. In collaboration with health care professionals in the DHCS, DMH, and DDS, the CDSS has begun a multi-year process during which it is intended that practices, protocols and funding mechanisms will be identified and put into place.

## **Other Efforts**

### **The Foster Youth Services Program**

The Foster Youth Services Program was created by the California Legislature in 1981, and is administered by the CDE. It is designed to:

- (1) Help obtain health and school records to determine appropriate school placements and coordinate instruction.
- (2) Provide direct service and/or referrals for counseling, tutoring, mentoring, vocational training, emancipation services and training for independent living.
- (3) Facilitate educational advocacy, training and collaboration among partner agencies and systems.

The CDE has expanded the countywide FYS Program to include 57 county offices of education. It served approximately 35,000 students in 2007.

The Foster Youth Services Program has demonstrated substantial progress in building collaborative relationships between various local agencies and systems that interface with the lives of foster youth. Interagency agreements and memoranda of understanding have been used with increasing frequency to formalize and document agreements between partner agencies. The collaborative relationships developed by the Foster Youth Services Countywide Programs have resulted in comprehensive services being provided to foster youth. The goal of the CDE is to expand the Foster Youth Services Program to serve children and youth in all foster care placements in every county.

### **Residentially Based Services Reform**

AB 1453, authored by Assembly Member Soto and sponsored by the California Alliance of Children and Family Services (the Alliance), was signed by Governor Schwarzenegger on October 11, 2007 (Chapter 466, Statutes of 2007). This law encourages counties to develop partnerships with non-profit agencies to test alternative programs to group home care, so that children with complex emotional and behavioral needs are matched with appropriate services, while staying connected to their communities. Youth currently in group home care often experience multiple placements resulting in a lack of consistent connections with family, schools, and communities. Casey Family Programs, in collaboration with the Alliance, has stepped forward to provide the technical support and evaluate results to help counties develop innovative programs.

The coalition of committed stakeholders and advocates had worked with the CDSS since 2004 to reassess the roles of group homes for children and youth. The diverse workgroup included family members, emancipated foster youth, child and family advocates, policymakers, researchers, care provider representatives, and county and state public officials from law enforcement, social service, child welfare, mental health, and education agencies and departments. Their efforts resulted in the development of a framework for transforming the current system of foster care group homes into a system of child-centered, residentially-based services which will reduce lengths of stay for youth needing this level of care and services.

Counties will be asked to opt in as demonstration sites to test alternative programs and funding models as the first step towards statewide implementation of residentially-based services. While the number of children in group home facilities has steadily decreased within the last decade, there is an expectation of an increase in the demand for group home care, based on the implementation of juvenile justice realignment and the redirection of juvenile offenders to county supervision.

### **Education Coordinating Council**

In addition to statewide efforts, many counties have devoted considerable resources to the area of educational needs of their children. One example of this is the Los Angeles County Education Coordinating Council (ECC). The ECC was created by the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors in November 2004, and was charged with raising the educational achievement of foster and probation youth throughout the county. More than 200 educators, child welfare and probation experts, advocates, community leaders, youth and caregivers developed a set of recommendations. The establishment of a coordinating body that would provide oversight and accountability for raising the educational attainment of these youth was recommended.

The ECC brings together the major stakeholders responsible for the educational performance of foster and probation youth. Its 23 members include the leadership of school districts with significant numbers of system youth, county departments, the juvenile court, city and county children's commissions, advocacy and planning groups, community agencies, and youth and their caregivers. Its purpose is to coordinate efforts across organizations and jurisdictions, encouraging networks of people to collaborate to expand best practices and fill the gaps in communities where little help or support for families is available so that none of the Los Angeles County's children are left behind.

During its initial year, the ECC reached out to hundreds of organizations, agencies, constituent groups and communities in Los Angeles working to overcome the existing barriers to effectively working together and building solid relationships with those who share responsibility for or have an interest in the education of system youth. The ECC developed a comprehensive blueprint for raising the educational achievement of Department of Children and Family Services and probation youth.

As a body, the ECC is now engaged in championing the seven basic agreements outlined in the Blueprint, promoting needed partnerships, developing and coordinating new ideas for raising educational achievement, tracking indicators of success, monitoring and reporting progress, intervening when called upon, and problem-solving in order to implement the recommendations and actions suggested in the Blueprint.

Some key ECC accomplishments:

- Completed data matches with Los Angeles Unified, Pasadena Unified, Pomona Unified and Montebello Unified School Districts, DCFS and Probation to determine which schools they attend and how they fare academically compared to other district students.

- Obtained the signatures of the superintendents of seven school districts—LACOE, Lancaster, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Pasadena, Keppel Union, and Pomona—on a letter, drafted by the Association of Community Human Service Agencies (ACHSA) and the Children’s Law Center of Los Angeles, outlining AB 490 regulations. The Association of Community Human Service Agencies (ACHSA) reported that, as a result of this letter, 87% of the youth in the care of its 80+ agencies are now enrolled in school within the required 3 days.
- Facilitated significant expansion of academic mentoring programs in the Los Angeles and Compton Unified School Districts. Five new Children Uniting Nations/MPLAY programs at LAUSD middle schools—Virgil, Gompers, Bethune, Drew and Markham—opened the spring of 2008 and will, collectively, serve 200 foster youth. The Children, Youth and Family Collaborative is now operating 20 academic mentoring programs in LAUSD and Compton USD elementary, middle and high schools, a 35% increase from 2006.

Currently, the ECC is:

- Working at the local, state, and federal levels to increase the ability to share records between county agencies and school districts in the most effective and streamlined way possible.

### **Improving Educational Continuity and School Stability for Children in Out-of-Home Care**

Casey Family Programs is sponsoring a Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) on Improving Educational Continuity and School Stability for Children in Out-of-Home Care. The issue of educational continuity and school stability for children in out-of-home care speaks to many dynamics that shape students’ educational outcomes. The longer a youth is in out-of-home care, the greater the number of out-of-home placements he or she is likely to experience. The challenge for all systems is to ensure youth in out-of-home care receive a positive school experience that will result in each young person’s achieving his or her individual potential.

In this Breakthrough Series Collaborative ten selected jurisdictions will step up to the challenge and initiate strategies and tests of change that target improving educational outcomes for children in out-of-home care. This initiative will require bold action and innovative leadership to make lasting change and partnerships. Of the 10 jurisdictions that have been selected to participate in the Breakthrough Series Collaborative, 5 counties are in California:

- Fresno County, Department of Children and Family Services.
- Los Angeles County, Department of Children and Family Services.
- Sacramento County, Department of Health and Human Services, Child Protective Services Division.
- San Diego County, Health and Human Services Agency.
- San Luis Obispo County, Department of Social Services.

Educational continuity and school stability promotes positive school experiences leading to improved educational outcomes for children in out-of-home care. Participating jurisdictions will identify, develop, and test potentially promising strategies for improving practice in their education and child welfare systems that will ultimately support educational continuity and school stability for children in out-of-home care. Jurisdictions will accomplish this by:

- Engaging with a group of other jurisdictions in critical change activities.
- Creating environments in which strategies can be developed and tested.
- Developing a cadre of leaders across the country who are working toward solutions.
- Creating and sustaining partnerships to advance the work.
- Disseminating lessons learned.

### **The Tutor Connection Program**

The Tutor Connection Program is a collaboration with San Diego Child Welfare (Health and Human Services Agency); California State University, San Marcos, College of Education; the San Diego County Office of Education, Foster Youth Services (SDCOE, FYS); and Casey Family Programs. This program teaches student teachers about the unique educational needs of foster youth (including basic information about child welfare, foster care and the educational impacts of trauma abuse and neglect), then has them provide one-on-one tutoring to a youth in foster care. The program is administered by the Foster Youth Services Program. California State University at San Marcos (CSUSM) students perform Community Service Learning hours which apply to their minimum required student contact hours for entry into the teacher credential program at the University.

Over the past six years, 1,250 student teachers have increased reading scores significantly for 69% of 1,500 foster children and increased standard scores in at least one subject for over 80% of these uniquely vulnerable students. The Office of Community Service Learning selected the Tutor Connection Program as an example of best practices in campus community partnership programs and reports that it is one of the university's strongest service learning partnerships. The program is currently one of three finalists nominated for the prestigious Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Partnership Award for Campus-Community Collaboration (JRCPA). The JRCPA showcases examples of community partnerships with colleges and universities that leverage the resources of the campus for the benefit of the community and student learning.

The Foster Youth Student Information System (FY-SIS) is a web-based database and is administrated by San Diego County of Education, Foster Youth Services (SDCOE, FYS). This database displays, in a secure and filtered manner, specific educational information on all students in foster care in San Diego County. Downloaded information is received from San Diego County Child Welfare, their school district and REGIS. REGIS is a data management system used by San Diego County Juvenile Court. There are several different user groups and each user group such as Child Welfare, Juvenile Court, Public Defenders, CASA and school district personnel have a unique screen set that only contains certain information. This database exists through collaboration between San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, San Diego County Probation, San Diego County Juvenile Court and San Diego County school districts. There is an interagency agreement and a Memorandum of Agreement allowing for this data exchange.

### **Other Community Efforts**

Efforts have been made by local organizations to join forces with the community and make a difference in the lives of local foster children. In addition to other charitable programs, one company in particular (in operation throughout California) has targeted non-profit organizations that support foster youth and established Foster Kids Agency Partners. With the help of the community, they have obtained and provided items/services to foster children such as school supplies, tutoring, summer camp, soccer shoes, birthday presents and warm clothes. The same company led a campaign to collect new shoes, which were distributed to local foster children through Agency Partners. In June of 2008, the New Clothing Drive began and is aimed at providing new clothing to foster children in need.

### **Foster Youth Career Development and Employment Summit**

On January 8 and 9, 2008, more than 300 foster youth, former foster youth, caretakers, community-based organizations, employers, and professionals from child welfare, workforce development, education, and probation from across California came together in Sacramento to address employment and career development issues and forge solutions for the nearly 85,000 young people in foster care in California. Sponsored by Casey Family Programs, New Ways to Work, and the Child and Family Policy Institute of California (CFPIC), the summit was the first statewide gathering of its kind.

This gathering was an extension of recent innovative work at the national, state, and local levels demonstrating the positive results of a streamlined, cross-disciplinary approach across government sectors. It was also built on the importance of public/private partnerships in preparing foster youth for success in living wage, career entry-level employment. The Summit brought policy makers together with a statewide network of county-based, cross-disciplinary teams working to improve quality employment and career development practices for foster youth in California.

Forty-eight counties were represented at the Summit which featured interactive strategic planning and priority setting sessions, cross-disciplinary county team sessions to develop local commitments and define next steps. There was also a panel of leaders from Child Welfare, Education, Workforce and Philanthropy who identified opportunities and shared the need for program alignment at the state and local levels.

The two-day summit focused on providing solutions and policy recommendations aimed at achieving the following four outcomes:

- Prioritize career development and employment for every foster youth.
- Connect youth to education and workforce development programs.
- Support emancipating and emancipated youth in their transition to adulthood.
- Provide work experience and job opportunities that lead to economic success.

The Summit culminated with a hearing at the state Capitol, where the sponsoring partners, local practitioners from around the state, and current and former foster youth shared priority actions with members and staff of the state Assembly and Senate.

### **The Mental Health Services Act - Wraparound Services**

The CDSS's role in the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) relates to the requirement that counties provide children with services such as Wraparound Services, pursuant to California Welfare and Institutions Code, section 18250. The CDSS has administrative authority for California Wraparound Programs, and is also responsible for meeting the Department's obligations under the MHSA. Five positions established specifically to support CDSS's role in the MHSA provide essential leadership, oversight and expertise to social services and mental health partners at both state and local levels in order to ensure that counties meet the necessary requirements.

- California Wraparound programs are up and running in 39 counties, up from 28 when the MHSA became effective in January 2005. Seven counties are actively planning to establish a wraparound program.
- The CDSS and DMH are collaborating to provide counties appropriate training and technical assistance with respect to the MHSA requirements and California Wraparound. Since January 2005 when the MHSA went into effect, approximately 45 days of training statewide and approximately 175 days of on-site technical assistance to 33 counties has been provided.
- An MOU between CDSS and DMH to allow data exchanges is now in place.
- An MOU specific to the MHSA establishing the formal relationship, roles, and responsibilities of DMH and CDSS is moving through the approval process and expected to be executed this fiscal year.
- In June 2008, CDSS and its partners hosted the Fifth California Wraparound Institute in Anaheim with over 1,100 participants.
- Other active projects include:
  - Revision of the standardized training curriculum for California Wraparound.
  - Participation with DMH and the California Institute for Mental Health on the Wraparound Community Development Teams two-year project.

CDSS and DMH are actively engaged in efforts to develop and implement a protocol for defining and measuring outcomes at a state-level. Outcomes are tracked and reported at the local level in some counties, such as Los Angeles, Orange, and Sacramento. For example, Los Angeles County's 2007 Report on Wraparound includes data that shows a correlation between an increased focus on Wraparound Services and a decrease in group home enrollments.

Further, the collaborative Wraparound Community Development Team Project, which is funded by DMH, includes a strong emphasis on measuring outcomes. This particular component of the project provides CDSS with practical insights that will help ensure outcomes are measured on a statewide basis accurately and effectively.

## **The Progress of the State Interagency Team (SIT) in Increasing Access to Mental Health Treatment Services for Foster Youth Placed Out Of County**

This year the SIT continued work on a variety of issues that impact children and families. One of the objectives for this year was to ensure that needed mental health, health and educational services are provided to foster children placed out of county. To address this issue, the DMH drafted regulations. At a recent SIT meeting, it was reported that the DMH emergency regulations to assure the provision of mental health services to children placed out-of-county are currently under review by the state Department of Finance (DOF). This is measurable progress over the past six months in addressing a long-standing problem for foster children placed out-of-county. Team members noted that this may also be an issue that state Child Welfare Council might wish to pursue if problems arise in implementing solutions.

Senate Bill (SB) 785 (Chapter 469, Statutes of 2007) requires the DMH to create a standardized contract, service authorization procedures, and related procedures to facilitate a foster child's receipt of medically necessary services. As directed by SB 785, the CDSS has been collaborating with the DMH to develop and disseminate informational documents for use by local mental health and social services providers to implement the mandates of that bill. Standardized contracts, service authorization procedures and informational materials will be finalized and distributed in June 2008.

## **The Implementation of Legislation to Increase Connections for Foster Children**

In order to further facilitate connections, CDSS budgeted for and began implementation of AB 408 (Chapter 813, Statutes of 2003), which dealt with efforts to identify, evaluate and assess relationships between foster children and other important people in their lives. AB 1412 (Chapter 640, Statutes of 2005) created a phased-in expansion of requirements that county social workers ask children 10 years of age or older, beginning with those children placed with a non-relative, about important adult relationships and to make efforts to support those relationships. AB 1412 also required a court determination whether the agency has made reasonable efforts to maintain the child's relationships with individuals other than the child's siblings who are important to the child, consistent with the child's best interests. Further, AB 1412 specified that every foster child, 10 years of age or older, has the right to be involved in the development of both his/her case and permanent placement plans. It requires that a child's case plan include a statement of the child's wishes regarding their permanent placement plan and an assessment of those stated wishes. It also allows foster children 12 years of age or older to review, sign and be given a copy of their own case plan.

The state budget for SFY 2006-07 included \$7.7 million for the implementation of AB 1412, which includes and expands implementation of AB 408. Counties have been funded for the increased workload associated with social workers' efforts to identify, evaluate and assess relationships between foster children and other important people in their lives. On March 12, 2008, CDSS held a public hearing (ORD # 0507-02) for proposed regulatory action(s) which included regulations for AB 1412.

This is monitored by the courts, which are required to make a judicial determination whether the agency has made reasonable efforts to maintain a child's relationships with individuals



other than the child's siblings who are important to the child, consistent with the child's best interests.

### **The Linkages Project**

The CalWORKs/Child Welfare Partnership Project, also known as the Linkages Project, was launched in November 2000 to develop a coordinated services approach to better serve families and improve outcomes. The Linkages Project is a state and private non-profit partnership. Linkages assist both state and county CWS and California Work Opportunities and Responsibility to Kids (Cal-WORKs) programs with systems integration strategies. The purpose of this Project is to develop a coordinated services approach to improve safety, permanency, and wellbeing outcomes for children and families in California.

Initially funded by the Stuart Foundation as a four-year initiative, Linkages was developed and directed by the California Center for Research on Women and Children (CCRWF). The Linkages philosophy is that through improved coordination, child welfare services can also serve as an anti-poverty program; and CalWORKs (known formally as the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids) can help to prevent child abuse and neglect.

Phase I of the Linkages project disseminated a statewide county survey to develop recommendations on how to coordinate child welfare and public assistance programs statewide. This survey identified six programmatic areas identified as priorities: Organizational Structures, Flexible Financing, Organizational Change and Training, Data Systems, Confidentiality and Coordinated Case Planning. Over 50 county and state leaders worked for 6 months in a facilitated process to develop the recommendations, which were summarized in a series of publications, distributed to all 58 counties and presented at a statewide conference. These original documents continue to be available at [www.ccrwf.org](http://www.ccrwf.org).

Due to the success of the project, the Stuart Foundation committed to continued funding under the direction of the Child and Family Policy Institute of California (CFPIC), launching Phase II of Linkages in April 2005. In Phase II, 17 additional counties received financial support and technical assistance to plan and implement Linkages strategies. Additional information may be found at: [http://www.cfpic.org/linkages/linkages\\_001.htm](http://www.cfpic.org/linkages/linkages_001.htm)

In October 2006, in partnership with the Child and Family Policy Institute, CDSS/OCAP submitted a proposal for funding and was awarded a federal grant to expand The Linkages Project into Phase III. The federal funding agreement provides a 5-year commitment of \$1,963,599, or 90% of project funding while CDSS/OCAP contributes \$258,621 (a 10% match) for the project. The 33 counties that are participating in the grant will receive training and technical assistance through September 2011. The grant facilitates statewide case plan coordination between CalWORKs and Child Welfare Services at the county level. The Linkages approach is that positive client outcomes will occur when seamless coordination of services between these two systems occurs. All participating Phase III counties have completed and submitted the self-assessment and project training, and technical assistance is being coordinated to continue project support.

On October 16-17, 2007, the Annual Convening was held in Sacramento. The following training needs were identified: information about outcomes and evaluation, substance abuse

and the impact on TANF and child welfare families, engaging hard-to-serve families, fiscal information and cross training on TANF and child welfare programs.

The Statewide Linkages Oversight Committee (SLOC) continues to meet monthly and the project publishes a statewide monthly newsletter titled, "Keeping Linked." Additionally, a Technical Advisory Group was developed to include both state and county staff to advise the evaluator, Paul Harder of Harder + Company, about project evaluation design and the Logic Model, and will begin by reporting the findings retroactively on Phase I and II counties.

The project has launched an intranet site that will support the exchange of information and peer learning among the Linkages counties. The intranet site will include a section coordinator contacts for each county, a calendar of events, and a document section for posting policy, procedures and other documents that can be shared via downloads, as well as a discussion board that will allow for peer learning.

## **PIP Outcome: Systemic Factors**

## **Systemic Factors**

Progress made through the Program Improvement Plan (PIP) in the federal Systemic Factors is as follows:

**Objective 1: California will develop and fully implement its new outcomes based quality assurance system, the California Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR) in January 2004 and complete a review of at least 15 counties by June 2005. (PIP Systemic Factor 3, Item 31.)**

This objective has been met. The new outcome-based quality assurance system has been fully implemented, and serves as the starting point in the ongoing process of collecting, analyzing and applying data to hold the state accountable.

The state and counties find the new system to be very useful. The next steps are to continue to track the data over time, and to come to a thorough understanding of the interaction between outcomes. In the next phase of this quality assurance system, more in-depth analyses can be performed to produce information that can help guide policy and practice - this includes the use of the Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR).

The purpose of the PQCR is to learn, through intensive examination of county child welfare practice, how to improve child welfare services and practices in California; both in the participating county and in other jurisdictions as well. The PQCR goes beyond the county self-assessment by incorporating outside expertise, including county peers, to help identify the strengths and weaknesses of county child welfare services delivery systems and social worker and probation officer practices. In SFY 2007/08, fourteen counties were scheduled for the PQCR process. County CWS agencies and Probation Departments participated in the PQCR process concurrently. For the PQCR process, county CWS and Probation agencies identify a focus area based on outcome measures needing improvement. In the area of Safety, two of the fourteen county CWS agencies chose decreasing recurrence of maltreatment as a focus area. In the area of Permanency, four CWS agencies and two Probation Departments chose the focus area of decreasing the number of foster care re-entries; three CWS agencies and two Probation Departments focused on improving placement stability; and one CWS agency and one Probation Department focused on reducing the number of foster care placements. In the area of Well-Being, three Probation Departments examined their Independent Living Plan programs specific to services to prepare youth to transition out of foster care; one CWS agency and three Probation Departments focused their PQCR process on all areas of transitioning youth out of foster care.

The following is a brief summary of the PQCR Analysis completed August 2007. It is anticipated that an analysis of the PQCR's held in SFY 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10 will be completed subsequent to June 30, 2010.

### **Factors Affecting Performance**

- CWS and Probation staff reported that staff turnover and difficulties with recruitment and retention contributed significantly to the challenges of burdensome workloads and

high caseloads. Small counties noted that it was difficult to recruit qualified workers to rural areas, where compensation is relatively low. Moreover, they found significant difficulties in retaining supervisory and management staff, who frequently move to larger counties after a short time. Larger counties, while drawing from a larger pool of potential staff, reported high turnover due to stress, high and difficult caseloads, and inability to lower caseloads due to county policies or restrictive budgets.

- Probation officers in 21 counties (55.3%) regarded their overall workload as a challenge, but made relatively few recommendations. Most interviewees regarded their workloads as overly heavy and burdensome, particularly due to “excessive paperwork” and ever-increasing requirements for documentation.
- CWS social workers linked heavy workloads and documentation requirements to reduced time with children and families. Other factors ascribed to burdensome or increased workload include high caseloads and staff turnover (see below) as well as implementation of time-consuming new initiatives such as Structured Decision Making, Team Decision Making and Differential Response.
- Half of all counties reported that caseloads of up to 35 or 40 cases per CWS worker posed significant challenges. Both probation and CWS staff reported high levels of stress and inadequate time to complete all of their duties and still have time to spend with children and families.

Through the PQCR, the counties describe the services needed as indicated below:

<b>SERVICE NEEDS</b>				
<b>Services Needed</b>	<b>CWS Agencies Citing Service Needs</b>		<b>Probation Agencies Citing Service Needs</b>	
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Transportation or visitation services	25	52.1	16	42.1
Mental health services (Medi-Cal)	23	47.9	13	34.2
Alcohol and drug treatment for adults and youth	24	50.0	5	13.2
Housing	12	25.0	5	13.2
Parenting classes	11	22.9	1	2.6
Domestic violence	6	12.5	0	0
Preventive services	6	12.5	0	0
Aftercare services	7	14.6	6	15.8

- Additional service-related challenges include an overall lack of services in rural areas, identified in 22 (45.8%) CWS reports and 10 (26.3%) probation reports, and inadequate bilingual or culturally competent services, identified in 21 (43.8%) CWS reports and 4 (10.5%) probation reports.

#### Recommendations

- The most frequent recommendations were to lower caseloads and hire additional staff. Methods to implement the recommendation included reviewing caseloads and

assignments to redistribute and equalize more difficult cases among staff; using paraprofessional and clerical staff to perform duties not required to be handled by social workers or probation officers; reviewing case transfer procedures; and using multi-disciplinary teams.

- Other recommendations include re-defining the roles of clerical and paraprofessional staff, and using or hiring support staff to provide the following functions:
  - Parent partners/advocates.
  - Relative assessment.
  - Referrals to services.
  - Requests for travel and medication, transportation.
  - Supervising parent/sibling visits.
  - Obtaining information on services, especially out of county.
  - Coordinating services provided to children and families.
  - Serving as a liaison to education, eligibility and foster family agencies.
  - Coordinating group home referrals.
  - Making packets for probation families.
  - Documentation of children's health and education services.
- Hiring additional staff to work with families with English as a second language and developing written materials in Spanish and other languages.
- Eight (16.7%) CWS and four (10.5%) probation reports made recommendation to address challenges in locating appropriate services for their clients either within or outside of their communities. Most recommended developing resource guides. A few counties reported that they had developed on-line or hard-cover guides to services and resources within their communities, and that these guides are very useful.
- Recommendations centered primarily on increasing culturally competent services and services in rural areas. Several counties recommended building community collaborative to provide services.
- Work closely with partners to provide parent partners/parent mentors, voluntary family maintenance services and aftercare services.
- Increase wraparound services involving multi-disciplinary teams to provide intensive services to families.

#### Identified promising practices

- Consistent use of standardized risk and safety assessment tools at critical decision making points that improved their decision making were reported by ten counties. One county cited the value of supervisors reviewing the risk and safety assessment tools completed by their staff. Recommendations were also made by both CWS and Probation staff for implementation of standardized tools, for consistent use and to expand tool use for multiple decision points.
- Almost two-thirds of all counties cited CWS strengths and practices and over half of counties cited probation strengths and practices in engaging and working with families, youth and extended family members.
- Two counties involve tribes as extended family and one county emphasized the importance of understanding tribal cultural needs, values and available services in

developing and implementing case plans. Another related the value of tribes in supporting the child and family.

### Barriers and Challenges

- Lack of parental motivation and resistance to working with CWS and Probation were cited by 14 CWS and 15 Probation agencies. Parental issues such as substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues of parents were also cited as barriers to working with parents. Lack of client motivation, substance abuse or mental health issues and low priority for probation youth in Independent Living Services were cited as challenges to youth engagement.
- Several counties noted that it takes time and extra effort to engage extended family members and that workers did not always have adequate time
- Several counties which actively involved tribes also related challenges resulting from cultural differences

**Objective 2: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target that a core curriculum is developed and delivered by all training entities statewide. (PIP Systemic Factor 4, Item 32.)**

This objective has been met.

The evaluation framework has been implemented, and data is being collected for all new line workers and supervisors who complete common core training. Data from the common core evaluations have been collected and analyzed by the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC). Reports are generated as the data is received, and are used to inform curriculum revisions and improve delivery of the training. Preliminary analysis using knowledge testing for the common core curricula has been completed. Data collection and pilot analysis continued through the summer of 2006. Although the pilot analysis has been completed resulting in curricula and test questions, data collection and analysis is an ongoing activity to provide feedback for the three-year core update/revision cycle.

**Objective 3: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to meet the PIP target that statewide minimum requirements for the ongoing training of existing staff will be established and implemented. (PIP Systemic Factor 4, Item 33.)**

This objective has been met. The proposed regulations were initially submitted to the Office of Regulation Development in June 2005. An ACIN (I-85-04) was disseminated alerting counties to these proposed regulations.

The regulations are going through final reviews and sign offs and will be going into effect July 1, 2008. ACL (08-23) dated May 19, 2008, was released to counties. The ACL informs the counties of the new regulation regarding mandatory hours of training for ongoing line workers and supervisors.

**Objective 4: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to meet the PIP target that a standard core curriculum will be developed and used to train caregivers in all counties. (PIP Systemic Factor 4, Item 34.)**

This objective has been met.

**Objective 5: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to meet the PIP target that where service gaps are identified by counties in the C-CFSR process, 20% of the counties will have addressed at least one identified service gap. (PIP Systemic Factor 5, Item 36.)**

This objective has been met.

**Objective 6: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to meet the PIP target that of counties where improvement is needed, as identified in the C-CFSR process for 1) service array for youth and Native American and African American children, and 2) case plans are generic and lack an individualized approach, 20% of the counties will have addressed at least one identified service gap. (PIP Systemic Factor 5, Item 37.)**

This objective has been met.

**Objective 7: By June 30, 2005, the State will ensure that all State/county licensing and approving staff are trained on and apply the same licensing/approval standards to all foster family homes. (PIP Systemic Factor 7, Item 42.)**

This objective has been met.

**Objective 8: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target that each county will implement a State-approved recruitment plan that reflects the racial and ethnic diversity of children in care. (PIP Systemic Factor 7, Item 44.)**

This objective has been met.

#### **Other Efforts:**

##### **California Child Welfare Council (CWS)**

Co-chairs, California Health and Human Services Secretary Kim Belshé and California Supreme Court Associate Justice Carlos Moreno, held the first meeting of the new California Child Welfare Council on November 15, 2007 in Sacramento. As the first group of its kind in California, the council is designed to address the needs of children in the foster care system or in danger of out-of-home placement throughout the state. The Council's 53 members include leaders from all three branches of state government as well as county leaders, current and former foster youth, tribal representatives, child and parent advocates, and researchers. It is an advisory body that will consider recommendations to improve child and family outcomes through increased collaboration and coordination among the programs, services and processes administered by the multiple agencies and courts that serve children and youth in California's child welfare system.



The California Child Welfare Council was created through legislation signed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. The Council will have the opportunity to build on the ongoing work of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care, a group led by Justice Moreno and appointed by the Chief Justice to enhance the ability of the courts and the legal process to improve safety, permanency, well-being, and fairness for children in foster care. The bylaws for the Council were adopted at the March 18, 2008 meeting. The third meeting of the Council was held on April 18, 2008.

### **CWC Vision**

Every California child deserves a safe, stable, permanent home, nurtured by healthy families with the capacity to meet the child's needs, support their well-being and to be prepared for the transition into adulthood to become contributing members of society.

### **CWC Mission**

We provide an effective, collaborative forum for the three branches of government, foster youth and their families, and key stakeholders to advocate for initiatives, policies and programs that improve outcomes for children, youth and families involved with or at risk of involvement in the child welfare system.

### **CWC Guiding Principles**

- Collaboration is essential to achieving improved outcomes for children, youth and families.
- Accountability for child, youth and family outcomes is a shared responsibility across federal, state, and local government and among multiple agencies, the courts, community partners, families, and youth.
- Engaging families and youth in the development, implementation and evaluation of services, programs, and policies is essential to achieving improved system outcomes.
- Sharing data and information across governmental jurisdictions, agencies and the courts promotes more informed program planning, development and evaluation. At the local level, it enables the linkage of children, youth and families to appropriate community services and supports.
- Best and promising practices should be replicated statewide where appropriate and possible.
- Maximizing and using multiple funding sources flexibly across systems provides resources needed to meet the comprehensive and complex needs of children, youth and their families.
- Recommendations will be culturally appropriate, strength-based, evidence-based, and outcomes-driven to ensure that all children, youth and their families are treated fairly and equally without regard to age, race, gender, sexual orientation and ethnicity.

## **Administration of the Court's Child Welfare Improvement Project: Self-Assessment for California Juvenile Dependency Courts (Formerly known as The Court Improvement Program)**

The Child Welfare Improvement Project (CWIP) of the Administrative Office of the Courts Center for Families, Children & the Courts (CFCC) is developing a local Self-Assessment and Court Improvement project for California Juvenile Dependency Courts. CDSS is providing technical assistance to the project through quarterly meetings with CIP staff and its participation on the Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee.

Using a process designed by the CFCC, local courts will be encouraged to assess their dependency policies and operations around the key topics identified by the *2005 Dependency Court Improvement Program Reassessment* as deficiencies or areas in need of further study. The self-assessment tools, modeled on tools developed by CFCC's Domestic Violence Safety Partnership (DVSP) program, will include sections for assessing compliance with state and federal mandates, as well as adherence to best practice standards from the *Resource Guidelines* and elsewhere.

Currently, AOC is administering local self-assessments for county courts on the topics of the detention hearing, collaboration including court participation in the CFSR, notice and the Indian Child Welfare Act. Courts will choose specific areas of improvement, create a local court improvement plan that addresses these areas and set measurable outcomes for improvement. The CWIP will facilitate the development of these plans, monitor the progress of the plans and report non-confidential outcomes as part of the CWIP report. CWIP will also coordinate CFCC's dependency-related training and technical assistance resources to assist the courts in carrying out their plans. CDSS' role in the Project is to offer technical assistance as requested, as well as having a staff member from CDSS as a part of the small working group.

### **The Court Improvement Program**

The Court Improvement Program (CIP) staff and the JRTA supervising attorney attended all the joint meetings on the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR), including: serving on the CFSR steering committee and the statewide assessment team. AOC staff assisted with the coordination of regionally-based focus groups; recruiting judicial officers, parents' counsel, children's counsel, and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) to participate. The AOC recruited two judicial officers and four attorneys from the CWIP and JRTA teams to serve as on-site reviewers.

Finally, CDSS staff attended the national Court Improvement Program meeting in December 2007, to plan California's coordination of efforts during the CIP meeting. The team members include the CIP staff; Glenn Freitas, Chief, Children's Services Operation and Evaluations Branch; Larry Bolton, Deputy Director/Chief Counsel and Will Sanson, CDSS Consultant for California Court Case Management System (CCMS) and CWS/CMS.

The CIP entered into an interagency agreement with CDSS to use data resources at the UC Berkeley Center for Social Services Research to provide data on safety and permanency outcomes for children specifically to judicial officers to further their involvement in the state's

Outcomes and Accountability project. The CIP staff is also coordinating the input of CDSS and CWS/CMS designers into the upcoming CCMS to align data elements, reduce duplication, enhance information sharing and follow a common schema of performance measurement. A working group on data exchange composed of CFCC, CDSS, county and Court members met for three days in Sacramento and three days in Santa Ana to plan data exchanges.

### **Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership**

The California Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership is a public-private partnership whose purpose is improving the lives of children and families who are in or are at risk of entering the state's child welfare system. Formed in 2006, the Partnership includes organizations committed to investing in the practices and supportive infrastructure that will improve the child welfare outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being.

Founding members of the Co-Investment Partnership include the CDSS, the CWDA, and the AOC and private philanthropic foundations including the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Casey Family Programs, the Stuart Foundation, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation and the Zellerbach Family Foundation. Staff support is provided by the Child and Family Policy Institute of California.

Private philanthropy has been a crucial partner in improving outcomes for children and families involved with the child welfare system. While philanthropic investments have played a pivotal role in seeding localized child welfare improvements, never before has there been an intentional, public-private effort to consider how philanthropic investments can be leveraged to create statewide impact. That is a primary goal of the Co-Investment Partnership—to institute an ongoing, strategic approach that identifies and seeds promising ideas, monitors outcomes, documents results and educates about the need for increased public resources to sustain and spread proven strategies.

In 2008, the partnership is engaging in the following:

- Updating and aligning the partnership's five-year strategic plan in order to address the current political and fiscal environment, leverage existing opportunities and ensure continued progress.
- Utilizing the partnership's advisory committee as a primary vehicle for collaborating with child welfare stakeholders and ensuring a coordinated approach to child welfare investments. With representatives from more than 40 organizations, the partnership's advisory committee functions as an inclusive, collaborative body that identifies how best to implement, sustain and spread critical child welfare improvements. The partnership's advisory committee is continuing its work to build and support an infrastructure that will ensure coordinated, collaborative and consistent implementation of key strategies and best practices throughout California and to advance the partnership's policy priorities.
- Undertaking public education and outreach activities to increase policymakers' understanding of child welfare issues and the critical need for continued reforms and investments. The partnership is continuing to engage in focused policymaker education and outreach in 2008, working to improve the understanding of California's

child welfare system, current improvement efforts and the need to support proven approaches.

Policy priorities in 2008 include:

- Sustaining investments for those who care for foster children.
- Supporting family connections that promote permanency.
- Coordinating approaches to education supports for foster youth.
- Developing collaborative connections between child welfare and mental health agencies.

Specific objectives include educating policymakers about the need for the following:

- Higher education support for youth who have been in foster care, particularly to expand tuition assistance and the guardian scholars program;
- Local capacity to identify family connections for youth in care, particularly technical assistance and search tools and
- Increased reimbursement rates for resource families.

Foundations have made considerable and successful investments in the first two of these areas to improve outcomes for older and transitioning youth. The key measure of success for the Partnership will be increased understanding among policy makers about how higher education supports and the identification of family connections are impacting youth permanency, and successful transitions and what more is needed to affect a greater number of California's youth.

### **Symposium on Fairness and Equity Issues in Child Welfare Training**

The sixth annual Symposium on Fairness and Equity Issues in Child Welfare Training was held on April 16-17, 2008, at the University of California, Berkeley. It was sponsored by CalSWEC in conjunction with the Regional Training Academies, the Inter-University Consortium and the CDSS. The Symposium serves as a statewide forum to create collaborative training solutions to advance fair and equitable practice and policy in child welfare. Presenters and participants shared their expertise, and this year's keynote speaker was Oronde A. Miller, M.S., Ph.D. candidate and Senior Director, Strategic Consulting, Casey Family Programs.

### **The California Disproportionality Project**

As previously described in the Safety section, racial disproportionality in California's CWS system is being addressed through our participation on the California Disproportionality Project, which is co-sponsored by the CDSS, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and Casey Family Programs through the California Co-Investment Partnership. This initiative launched in June 2008. In addition to a state level team, the project will include up to 14 county CWS agencies and involving their community and interagency partners.

## **Caseworker Visits for Children in Foster Care**

## **Caseworker Visits for Children in Foster Care**

Because the caseworker visits for children in foster care affect child well-being, safety and permanence, the caseworker visit plan has been included in this document in its own section as follows:

The state must describe:

How the state will use the additional funds under Title IV-B to support monthly caseworker visits with children in foster care:

California is currently developing a plan to achieve monthly visitation and has included it in this document. The state is still working on an allocation methodology but intends to use the funding to fund increased visiting and the additional data entry workload that is not currently required. California is a large and complex state and it has taken additional time to identify our data entry needs.

The procedures developed to track and report caseworker visit data:

California currently uses the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) system, the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) to capture data on social worker visits. CWS/CMS captures the location of the visit and it is a required field when a contact is entered. The state will continue to use this system for federal reporting on this issue. In addition, because Foster Family Agencies (FFA), with whom counties have placement agreements, do not have access to input data to CWS/CMS, an alternate method of collecting/reporting the data is being explored.

California is currently working with public and private agency stakeholders to implement the new federal requirements: These changes will involve at least these key areas:

- Clarifying social worker and visitation requirements including the purpose of the visits and documentation.
- Eliminating monthly visit exceptions.
- Identifying alternate data collection processes.
- Clarifying reporting requirements for contract agencies.

The state standards for content and frequency of caseworker visits which assure children are visited on a monthly basis:

California currently has a monthly social worker visit standard for children in foster care, however exceptions may be granted under specified circumstances. An exception may be granted if the child is routinely visited by other child welfare agency representatives and there is a written agreement for those contacts to be reported. No exceptions may be granted when a child is placed in a group home.

The most common circumstances for a visit exception is when a child is placed by the county having care and supervision of the child with a FFA. The county signs a

placement agreement with the FFA for each child placed. The FFA has responsibility for developing a needs and services plan for the child and for visiting the child and the caregiver. The FFA makes quarterly reports to the county agency documenting the visits with the child and caregiver. Currently, the FFA visits are not required to be entered into CWS/CMS by the county worker. This placement agreement is currently under revision to align it with federal requirements.

Caseworkers (Social Workers) visit and care for children in accordance with Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP) Division 31 Section 31-320 (Social Worker Contacts with the Child). The MPP Division 31, Section 31-206.24 requires the social worker to establish a case plan that includes a schedule of "planned social work contacts and visits with the child". The contacts must take place in accordance with Section 31-320 (social worker/probation officer contacts with the child). MPP Section 31-320.11 emphasizes the social worker visit objectives to ensure the child's safety, permanency and well-being by focusing on the following achievements in conjunction with the child's case plan: verifying the location of the child, monitoring the safety of the child, assessing the child's well-being, and assisting the child in preserving and maintaining religious and ethnic identity; gathering information to assess the effectiveness of services provided to meet the child's needs, to monitor the child's progress, and to meet identified goals; establishing and maintaining a helping relationship between social worker and child to provide continuity and stability point for the child; and soliciting the child's input on his/her future, informing the child as to current and future placement plans and progress, and discussing these plans and progress with the child.

The child's caseworker is a social worker as defined by Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 1, General Licensing Requirements: "Social Worker" means a person who has a graduate degree from an accredited school of social work."

California meets the requirements of the Safe and Timely Interstate Placement Act of 2006, which increased the "frequency of required caseworker visits from every 12 months to every 6 months for children in out-of-State foster care placements..." Senate Bill 933, Chapter 311, Statutes of 1998, required that children placed in group homes out-of-state are visited once a month and this requirement is captured in the Manual of Policies and Procedures 31-320.414. Additionally, the Manual of Policies and Procedures 31-510 Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC), 31-510.3 requires California comply with Family Code sections 7900 through 7909 when sending foster children out-of-state. Family Code section 7906 requires California enter into an agreement with the receiving state to meet requirements for visitation, inspection, or supervision of children, homes, institutions, or other agencies in the receiving state.

Currently, the Manual of Policies and Procedures Division 31, sections 31-320.4 and 31-320.412 provide for less than monthly visit exceptions if certain conditions are present. Visit exceptions are primarily based upon the stability of the child in their current foster care setting and the effectiveness of the services provided to meet the child's needs. A visit exception is to be granted if the conditions set forth in Division 31 are met and is only applicable to the placement home in which the child is placed at the time the exception is approved. Therefore, if a child's placement changes, the exception is no longer valid and

the requirement for social worker visits with the child becomes monthly until a new visit exception is approved. Exceptions are allowed for: court supervised cases--court approval of a specific visitation plan and for voluntary cases--county deputy director approval of a specific visitation plan.

As required by the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006, the state of California will provide by June 30, 2008, "an outline of the steps it will take to ensure that 90 percent of children in foster care are visited by their workers on a monthly basis, and that the majority of the visits occur in the residence of the child by October 1, 2011." These exceptions will be eliminated within the timeframe allowed by federal law. CDSS is currently reviewing data to determine the extent of the use of visit exceptions in various circumstances and placement types. The specific plan is being developed and will be submitted as required in June 2008.

### **California's Plan to Conform with the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 – Monthly Caseworker Visits**

#### ***Summary:***

With the passage of Public Law (PL) 109-288, Congress enacted new provisions of law related to caseworker visits to foster children under the care of a state. The new provisions require California, and other states, to meet certain performance goals related to the number of caseworker visits a child in foster care receives and the location of those visits. In addition, each state must submit a plan to the Department of Health and Human Services that describes the state standards for the content and frequency of caseworker visits for children who are in foster care under the responsibility of the state, which, at a minimum, ensures that the children are visited on a monthly basis and that the caseworker visits are well-planned and focused on issues pertinent to case planning and service delivery to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the children. The plan must also outline California's performance goals as well as California's plans for meeting those goals. This document represents California's plan to meet those specific goals.

#### ***Mandate:***

By October 1, 2011, 90% of California's foster care children must receive a caseworker visit no less frequently than monthly for each full calendar month the child has been in foster care. Secondly, a majority of those visits must occur in the child's home.

#### ***Current California Regulations:***

Current California regulations require a monthly visit by a county caseworker (social worker, probation placement officer) with each child in foster care. Regulations allow for exceptions to the monthly visit requirements, upon written supervisory approval, when the child is in a stable placement, has no severe physical or emotional problems caused or aggravated by the placement, and prior to any exception being granted, the child is visited in three of the most recent four consecutive months. Exception criteria are found in Manual of Policy and Procedures, sections 31.320.31, .411, .412, and .6.



California statute and regulations require that a child placed in a group home or community treatment facility be visited by the social worker/probation officer at least once each calendar month, with at least a two week time frame between visits and the visit documented. (MPP §§ 31-320-.414.)

For example, if a child is in a stable placement at least six calendar months with a caretaker relative and has no severe physical or emotional problems caused or aggravated by the placement, then the case worker may visit the child quarterly rather than monthly.

### ***Steps in Development:***

In July 2007, the CDSS formed a workgroup consisting of CDSS staff, representatives from the county welfare and probation departments, the CWDA, the Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC), and the California Alliance for Child and Family Services (Alliance).

The workgroup discussed every aspect of the federal requirements, identified the populations of children who are not receiving monthly caseworker visits and why, and outlined the plan to bring California into compliance with PL 109-288.

The workgroup identified many areas where we can improve in order to meet the new federal requirements. The majority of the discoveries were relevant to the untimely entering of visitation data in the CWS/CMS by caseworkers. The lack of information regarding the juvenile justice population visitation and the incomplete visitation information recorded in CWS/CMS for children placed through a FFA indicated that we must be more vigilant in capturing and recording this data. On a positive note, it was ascertained that FFA social workers and juvenile justice probation officers are far exceeding the monthly visitation requirements. Additionally, the workgroup discovered that interstate placement data is not being captured consistently and we will be addressing this data entry issue also. California's baseline data is as follows:

Percentage of children visited monthly by a caseworker: 48.2%

Percentage of visits that occurred in the child's home: 69.9%

### **Specific Strategies**

#### ***Federal Fiscal Year 2008***

California's strategies for 2008 are:

1. Analyze California data to identify which populations require increased visits in order to meet the new federal monthly visit requirement. Initiate regulations to remove any existing monthly visit exceptions for foster children and clarify the purpose and location of monthly visits of foster care and adoption caseworkers and contracted FFA social workers.
2. Where monthly visits are being conducted but not reported, disseminate proper data reporting procedures to make maximum use of technology.
3. Review and update the Intercounty Transfer (ICT) Protocols to ensure monthly visits continue to occur and are documented during transfer period.

## Strategies One and Two

Recent federal mandates will require that these children be visited monthly and California will update its regulations appropriately. California will continue to gather and analyze visit data under the revised federal instructions and determine which populations are currently not being visited monthly. An analysis will be done as to why those populations are not receiving monthly visits, i.e., not accurately recording visits as opposed to not performing the visits. Where it is simply due to a lack of recording the visit, the CDSS will disseminate information to the counties on accurate recording via policy letter. For example, it has been suggested that when children are placed out-of-state in a placement other than a group home, visits to that child may not be recorded in the CWS/CMS as they are being performed by the host state and reported to California quarterly as required by the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC). These cases are not subject to state regulations requiring monthly visitation unless the child is placed in a group home since visits are subject to the terms of an ICPC agreement. Currently, no specific instructions have been released to the counties mandating that these visits be entered into CWS/CMS. The CWS/CMS already has training modules in place for many problematic/difficult areas. Counties will be referred to these training materials as appropriate. Where no training materials exist, procedures will be disseminated to county welfare and probation departments that focus on the new requirements. Additional data collection instructions and training will be provided by CPOC to county probation staff, where appropriate. In addition, counties will be instructed about the importance of timely recording of visit information.

In addition, California will eliminate current monthly visit exceptions to the extent required by federal law and begin the process of promulgating those regulations. The regulations will also be reviewed regarding the social worker/probation officer's responsibility for monitoring the placement during visits and further clarified for the purpose of monthly visits. Regulations regarding frequency and quality standards will also be revised for FFA social worker visits. An analysis of the additional costs associated with increased visit frequency will be completed and sources of funding will be identified.

Other areas which may need further instructions regarding data entry are adoptive placements awaiting finalization. The adoption caseworkers may not be entering this information into CWS/CMS. In addition, initial data analysis has indicated there may be a number of juvenile justice placements which have not been closed in CWS/CMS even though the actual cases have been closed. Instructions will be disseminated for both of these populations.

Currently California captures child specific data for the juvenile justice population for demographic and placement information only. The system does not have the capacity to record monthly visits. Therefore, the CDSS cannot accurately report caseworker visit data for this population. Accordingly, an analysis of the CWS/CMS will be made to determine whether data can be captured and if not, what system changes may be necessary. Although the new web-based CWS/CMS system will provide for probation officers access for juvenile justice reporting, that system is not due to be implemented until 2014. Therefore, during the initial year of the plan, California will analyze the CDSS capacity to build a repository for manual child specific monthly reporting of visits as an interim solution to the data system problem in

order to meet reporting goals and analyze the additional costs required to support the additional reporting and data entry.

Lastly, an analysis of out-of-county placements under courtesy supervision will be done to determine whether visits to this population are being made and recorded in CWS/CMS. If needed, instructions will be issued via policy letter to host counties on how to properly enter courtesy supervision visits using secondary assignment into the CWS/CMS system.

### Strategy Three

The CWDA currently maintains an ICT protocol to which all counties have agreed to conform. The ICT protocol is currently being updated by a county workgroup and will be completed by the end of this year. The ICT protocol will address issues of monthly visit and data entry requirements while the case is in the ICT process. The ITC Protocol can be found on CWDA's website at: <http://cwda.org/publications.htm>.

California projects that implementation of the above will result in the following target percentages:

### Performance Improvement Target

Description of Goal	Target Percentage End of FFY 2008
Children in foster care who were visited on a monthly basis	49%
Visits that took place in the residence of the foster child	Maintain a minimum of 51%

### ***Federal Fiscal Year 2009***

California's goals for 2009 are:

1. Eliminate existing exceptions to the monthly visit requirements that are currently allowed by California regulations as necessary to comply with federal requirements. Those exceptions are found at Manual of Policy and Procedures, Sections 31.320.31, .411, .412, and .6.
2. Implement data reporting of caseworker visits by FFA caseworkers for county agency data entry.
3. Implement data collection for juvenile justice foster children receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care (see goal #3, FFY 2008).
4. Implement changes to departmental regulations which align the purpose, frequency, and location of caseworker visits and FFA social worker visits with the child with federal requirements, to eliminate monthly visit exceptions, and to reflect monthly visit data reporting requirements regarding FFA, probation, and out-of-county/out-of-State courtesy supervision placements. California will revise its regulation to require that all foster children placed out-of-state are visited monthly.

### Strategy One

The CDSS will work with counties and other stakeholders to revise regulations to reflect that every child will be visited on a monthly basis. CDSS will work with counties and other stakeholders to revise existing exceptions to monthly visit requirements pertaining to case carrying county child welfare social workers to take into account that foster family agency social workers or out of state child welfare social workers would be able to complete the required monthly visits for the case carrying county child welfare social worker in order to meet federal requirements.

### Strategy Two

California has been and will continue to meet with the Alliance and representatives of FFAs to work on developing a process for reporting of monthly FFA caseworker visits to the child. Concepts such as revising and solidifying the placement agreements with FFAs to specify the purpose/quality and visit frequency standards and require reporting of caseworker visits with the child for recording in the CWS/CMS will be developed. Once the standard contract used with FFAs have been modified and a reporting method has been agreed upon, monthly FFA caseworker visits will be reported to the county. Those visits will then be entered into the CWS/CMS system by local county staff.

### Strategy Three

The CDSS will continue to work with the CPOC to develop a method of documenting child specific monthly visit information for juvenile justice youth. California will work with the CPOC and the counties to determine the best way to document juvenile justice youth data. This will likely include development of a child specific manual reporting form, or modification of an existing one, to capture additional juvenile justice data. Because the majority of juvenile justice youth are placed in group homes for which there are no exceptions to monthly visits, it is anticipated that improved data collection will result in a nearly 100% compliance rate for monthly visits to juvenile justice youth and that the majority of these visits will be in the child's place of residence.

### Strategy Four

The CDSS will begin its regulatory revision process in FFY 2008 with an anticipated effective date in 2009. The CDSS will evaluate any additional funding sources, including use of PSSF grants to use for this purpose. Regulations will be synchronized with new federal requirements as to the purpose and location of monthly caseworker visits to a foster child. In addition, the CDSS will revise and implement the regulations to reflect new juvenile justice youth, FFA, courtesy supervision and out-of-state reporting procedures, including the requirement that all foster children placed out-of-state are visited monthly.

California projects that implementation of the above will result in the following target percentages:

Description of Goal	Target Percentage End of FFY 2009
Children in foster care who were visited on a monthly basis	52%
Visits that took place in the residence of the foster child	Maintain a minimum of 51%

### ***Federal Fiscal Year 2010***

California's goals for 2010 are twofold:

1. Improve data collection for those foster children who are placed out-of-county under courtesy supervision or out-of-state.
2. Identify barriers to caseworker recruitment and retention and develop a plan for removing those barriers.

#### **Strategy One**

To meet this goal, the CDSS will develop procedures for reporting of visit information where the child is placed out-of-county or out-of-state.

Out-of-county: If the child is placed in a county which is contiguous to the sending county, then the sending county retains responsibility for visiting the child. For example, if the child is placed in Los Angeles County by Riverside County, Riverside would retain responsibility for visiting the child. Riverside County would send one of its workers to the child's home in Los Angeles County. However, if a child were placed in Sacramento County by Riverside County, then Riverside County would request that Sacramento County perform "courtesy supervision." Sacramento County, or any host county, can refuse the provision of those services Riverside would, of course, retain primary responsibility for the child and must ensure that services are being performed. However, because California and its counties are currently experiencing financial difficulties which cause them to have high caseloads, courtesy supervision requests are more likely to be denied. Accordingly, for children placed out-of-county, California will work to develop a process to clarify responsibilities for courtesy supervision and ensure those visits are recorded in CWS/CMS which it will release via policy letter.

Out-of-state: When a foster child is placed out-of-state, supervision is requested via the ICPC by the sending state. Although visits are generally being conducted by host states, California usually only receives the visit data quarterly from the host State. In addition, there are currently no instructions which mandate counties to enter this information in to the CWS/CMS. Accordingly, the CDSS will issue instructions on how to properly record out-of-state monthly visit data.

## Strategy Two

The CDSS will work with the workgroup and other interested parties to develop a plan to identify and address barriers to caseworker recruitment and retention.

California projects that implementation of the above will result in the following target percentages:

Description of Goal	Target Percentage End of FFY 2010
Children in foster care who were visited on a monthly basis	65%
Visits that took place in the residence of the foster child	Maintain a minimum of 51%

## ***Federal Fiscal Year 2011***

California's strategies for 2011 are:

1. To improve the quality of caseworker visits through improved training and supervision.
2. To provide additional resources to improve caseworker recruitment and retention and to counties to cover the increased costs of data entry.
3. The CDSS will continue to analyze monthly visit data from CWS/CMS for areas needing improvement and will provide technical assistance to counties experiencing difficulty meeting monthly visit goals.

## Strategies One and Two

California will continue to host meetings of the statewide workgroup to monitor progress and determine and address other barriers to meeting monthly visit requirements that surface as well as to discuss and share promising practices in the counties. The CDSS will then enhance our partnership with the California Social Work Education Center as well as the Center for Family-Focused Practice at UC Davis to develop curriculum and train county caseworkers and probation officers. This may include the development of new manuals dedicated to caseworker visits and possibly training videos illustrating techniques of successful county and agency caseworkers.

In 2011, California will implement the caseworker recruitment and retention plan developed in 2010. This may include such things as working with local social work schools regarding recruiting efforts, career fairs, recommending seniority bonuses for those with long service records, etc.

## Strategy Three

The CDSS will continue to work with counties which are not meeting their target goals with respect to monthly caseworker visits. This will involve monitoring counties via analyzing data, interviewing county administrators and caseworkers, and development of improvement plans including target dates for improvement. The CDSS will follow up with counties regarding improvement plans where necessary.

California projects that implementation of the above will result in the following percentages:

Description of Goal	Target Percentage End of FFY 2011
Children in foster care who were visited on a monthly basis	90%
Visits that took place in the residence of the foster child	Maintain a minimum of 51%

## **Training and Staff Development Plan**



## **TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

California's state-supervised, county-administered Child Welfare System (CWS) presents unique challenges and opportunities for developing and delivering training to various professional and paraprofessional child welfare staff and providers throughout the state.

The 58 county CWS programs vary in many ways: from rural to highly urbanized; from a workforce of a few public child welfare workers to a staff of thousands; and from no formal staff development organization to very sophisticated staff development departments. Meeting the evolving and diversified training needs for these programs requires a continuing innovative and multi-faceted approach.

Welfare and Institutions Code section 16200 et. seq. requires the CDSS to provide practice-relevant training for social workers, agencies under contract with county welfare departments, mandated child abuse reporters and all members of the child welfare delivery system. The stated purpose of the program is to develop and implement statewide coordinated training programs designed specifically to meet the needs of county child protective service social workers assigned emergency response, family maintenance, family reunification, placement and permanency responsibilities (Wel. & Inst. Code § 16206).

Consistent with the CDSS' federally approved cost allocation plan, training expenses are directly charged to the benefiting program. For costs allocated to Title IV-E, the non-federal discount rate is applied to account for the non-federal caseload. Also, all training contracts reflect the appropriate allocation of Title IV-E dollars for the application of the 75% enhanced training rate and the 50% administrative rate.

### **THE TITLE IV-B PLAN TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT GOAL**

#### **GOAL V 4: Prepare and support the workforce to help children and families reach positive outcomes.**

Objective 1: Develop and implement a core curriculum for all new child welfare workers and supervisors.

Objective 2: Establish minimum training requirements for ongoing training of existing staff.

Objective 3: Develop and implement a standard core curriculum for caregivers.

#### **Specific accomplishments/progress:**

**Objective 1:** This objective has been met as of June 2005.

**Objective 2:** This objective has been met as of June 2005.

**Objective 3:** This objective has been met as of June 2005.

## **TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

### **Regional Training Academies (RTAs)**

The five academies listed below are committed to offering a continuum of training services that will eliminate the duplication of, and offer consistency in, the delivery of training; assure linkages between the classroom and the field; support staff retention; promote the professionalism of current and potential staff in public social services and child welfare agencies within California; and promote promising practices in the field of child welfare.

### **Bay Area Training Academy (BAA)**

The BAA at San Francisco State University serves 12 counties that are very diverse in size, challenges faced, and internal resources. The BAA provides professional development services for the following 12 counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, and Sonoma.

BAA has:

- Continued and increased cycles of new worker and supervisor core training. Completed, by 3-31-08, 204 days of training out of 236 proposed days of training for a total of 4,656 participants. The Academy is on target to meet or exceed the deliverables in terms of training days/classes by 6-30-08.
- Remaining core C7 and core C8 (11 days for CORE), also started C9 in late June, probably about six more core days.
- Manager core - six days.
- Foundations of Supervision -10 days.
- Advanced training:
  - Kevin Coulter, MD, "Medical Assessment of Pediatric Injuries Differentiating Accidental from Non-Accidental Trauma. He will do three sessions with an estimated number of 100 participants per session.
  - Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) training on "Law and Ethics." Already have 50 registered participants with a waiting list of 30. This will be offered again in San Francisco sometime in the future.
  - Visitation Summit occurred in early April 2008. It was a follow-up to a large summit that was done last year, where counties sent teams to discuss best practice in visitation. This year the participants included some from last year and some new ones (27 attendees), selected by their counties, whose job it was to restructure their county's visitation program. It was highly successful. This work will continue quarterly for the BAA counties.
  - Follow-up quarterly trainings to last year's training, by The Peoples Institute, on "Undoing Racism." The primary audience is child welfare managers and supervisors with 30 participants.
  - One-day training, in collaboration with the California Evidence Based Clearinghouse, was completed at the end of March 2008 with 19 individuals in attendance.

## **Significant accomplishments**

- Has met all core needs of the Bay Area counties.
- Continued the “Undoing Racism” quarterly trainings that are increasing in number.
- Planned a follow-up Visitation Summit as requested by their counties.
- Planned and executed a day for Court Officers.
- Held a Manager core for the first time in a several years.
- Conducted a Nursing symposium in collaboration with Northern and Central RTA.
- Continue to meet with all counties on a quarterly basis for planning and partnership.
- Developed learning organization guidelines and training in two counties.
- Continued co-lead with Bay Area Social Services Consortium (BASSC) in developing knowledge management (transfer-of-learning and evidence-informed practices) processes for the Bay Area counties.
- Developed a Staff Development website.
- Continued to review curriculum for Fairness and Equity, Strength-Based Practice, Family Engagement, and Evidence-Based Practice.
- Actively participate as members of Statewide Training and Education Committee (STEC), Content Development Oversight Group (CDOG), Macro-Evaluation, Fairness and Equity planning event, West Coast trainers, Bay Area Social Services Consortium, Bay Area Human Resources Committee, Regional Children’s Committee, and Research and Training Network (RTN) that is co-sponsored by the Child and Family Policy Institute of California (CFPIC) and CalSWEC.
- Developed core training for support staff in child welfare.
- Y.O.U.T.H. training has grown in demand for our region.
- Worked with CalSWEC to develop the last of the CORE that is mandated. Working on a curriculum on health issues for children in foster care.

## **Changes**

- Have increased the number of CORE cycles this year to 8.5.
- Manager CORE - first in 3 years and well received.
- Web changes/ improvements.
- Added another 1/2 time trainer and Capacity Building staff member.
- Developed “A Day in the Life” curriculum for core; tying all the training together.
- Two day training on CWS/CMS for Alameda County with 22 participants.

## **Barriers**

- Core reaching all counties. The Bay Area Academy recently held a call in which all counties seemed happy about BAA’s core delivery. They will be looking at trying a few new things next fiscal year, such as having two core cycles that go for 9 months and giving small counties more access to core for workers who are carrying cases.
- One of the counties is using UC Davis for core, which has made it difficult to include other counties in the region. BAA is meeting with this county who has a new supervisor this month to work this out with them.
- BAA will be sending a survey out to counties at the end of the year to look at satisfaction with our service delivery.

- Have started a process to reorganize the Bay Area Academy to improve services to the counties and contracts. This process will also include developing a long-range strategic plan.
- Advanced training has been a challenge. They have developed training contracts with 4 counties to assist them in meeting their requirements.

### **Plans for the future**

- Reorganizing the Academy to better meet county needs and to improve internal efficiencies with limited resources.
- Keep training days and capacity building services the same as requested by the counties.
- Review all SIPS as a guide to advanced training.
- Send selected trainers to the Safe Measures Training for Trainers - to expand this in our region.
- Continue the work in Undoing Racism and Disproportionality as requested by the region.

### **Northern California Training Academy (NCTA)**

The NCTA located at the University of California, Davis, provides training tailored to the varied needs of 29 counties in Northern California: Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Glenn, Humboldt, Inyo, Lake, Lassen, Mendocino, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tuolumne, Yolo, and Yuba.

The participant and county totals are representative of only the first three quarters in SFY 2007/2008.

The NCTA has:

- Delivered eight Phase I Core trainings for approximately 247 new child welfare social workers. Delivered Phase II Core trainings for approximately 345 new child welfare social workers.
- Delivered one Core training for 10 new supervisors.
- Advanced and Specialized Courses delivered 51 courses across the region to 1,679 participants.
- Online Courses include: Confidentiality, Cultivating a Diverse Workforce, Dependency Legal Update, ICWA, Ethics in Social Work, Project Management for Managers, and Multi-Ethnic Placement Act. Online courses have been taken by 248 participants.

Research to Practice: Two days of training, with 167 participants attending, was held in Redding (March 25, 2008) and Davis (March 26, 2008).

Symposium for Nurses is scheduled for May 29, 2008; "Nurturing and Nourishing Children in the Foster Care System: The Impact of Attachment."

## **Significant accomplishments**

- Tools for Supervisory Excellence Program.
- Core.
- PQCRs.
- SafeMeasures.
- On-site county assistance.

## **Barriers**

- The ongoing challenges of implementing standardized core curricula for line social workers continued in this fiscal year.
- The increase in the cost in facilities, etc.

## **Plans for the future**

To continue to provide excellent customer service and a new “Tools for Excellence Program” focusing on managers.

## **Central California Public Social Services Training Academy (CCPSSTA) (Central)**

Located at California State University, Fresno, Central Academy works collaboratively with 11 counties in the central region: Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Stanislaus, Tulare, and Ventura.

CCPSSTA has:

- As of 03/15/08, provided core (21 days) for 41 new line workers and expect to have trained a total of 119 by 6/30/08.
- As of 3/15/08, provided core (10 days) for 17 new supervisors and expect to have trained a total of 24 supervisors by 6/30/08.
- Provided training, excluding core, in 113 topics.
- Assisted with the implementation and training of SDM in Tulare County.
- Assisted with the implementation and training of CAT in Mariposa County.
- Assisted with the evaluation of the statewide core curriculum and with the evaluation of items used for the evaluation tools.
- Developed a new mental health core curriculum to meet the standardized objectives and competencies.
- Updated the core curriculums to meet the standardized objectives and competencies in curriculum for ICWA, Values and Ethics, Basic Interviewing, Court Procedures, Multicultural Practice, Domestic Violence, Caregiver Substance Abuse, and CWS Documentation for Use in the Legal System.

## Significant Accomplishments

- Certified as a SafeMeasures training site.
- Updated all CWS/CMS training curriculums and has posted all CWS/CMS training guides on the CCPSSTA website.
- Updated all data training for supervisors and managers with current Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) measures.
- Co-sponsoring the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Central Valley ICWA conference attended by tribal representatives, county child welfare staff, and juvenile court judges and attorneys (June 9-11, 2008)
- Partnering with the Bay Area and Northern Training Academies to offer the Second Annual Central Valley Symposium for Title IV-E Public Health Nurses. (05/20/08)
- Provided Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR) training and support to San Luis Obispo, Tulare, Kings, and Kern counties.
- In partnership with CWDA, Central Region utilized our existing trainers to recruit and prepare a regional “pool” of hearing officers for *Gomez v. Saenz* fair hearings. Developed training curriculum and trained hearing officers for use by Central Region counties.
- Implemented “Phase III” of an ongoing evaluation of the use of field trainers/mentors for transfer-of-learning.
- Completed “CWS/CMS New User” and California Child Welfare Services Outcome System (CCWSOS) training of all 2<sup>nd</sup> year MSW and BSW Title IV-E students at CSU, Fresno. CWS/CMS “New User” training also completed for 2<sup>nd</sup> year MSW Title IV-E students at CSU, Stanislaus.
- Revised and delivered the “Cultural Broker” training curriculum as part of Fresno County’s Family to Family (F2F) implementation. Presented on the curriculum and training of Cultural Brokers at the annual National Staff Development and Training Association (NSDTA) conference.
- Assisted Child and Family Policy Institute of California (CFPIC) and the Co-Investment Partnership with development of an updated statewide training curriculum for supervisors and managers on the CCWSOS.
- Facilitated trainings for the Central California Area Social Services Consortium (CCASSC) directors and Regional CWDA managers/supervisors on the 2008 CFSR with a review of the process, findings, and program policy and training implications.
- Developed curriculum and delivered specialized trainings on “Diversity” and “Disproportionate Representation” to counties in the Region.
- Assisted the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse (CEBC) with delivery of two regional specialized trainings on “Evidence-Based Practice” to supervisors/managers.
- Developed specialized curriculum on the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS) Proposed Rule and delivered the training to CCASSC directors. Training tools and desk guides for supervisors and workers developed and posted on website.
- In partnership with CCASSC, Stuart Foundation and Stichting Promotie Intensieve Thuisbehandeling Nederland (SPIN),USA, initiated development of a “CCTA [Central California Training Academy] Leadership Institute” using a video interactive training method to prepare future child welfare leaders for Central California counties.

## **Plans for the future**

- CCPSSTA will offer beginning-through-advanced Safe Measures training to their eleven regional counties.
- Continue with the development and implementation of the CCTA Leadership Institute.

### **Public Child Welfare Training Academy (PCWTA)**

A division of the Academy for Professional Excellence

<http://theacademy.sdsu.edu>

Based at San Diego State University and in partnership with California State University, San Bernardino, the Academy provides a comprehensive, competency-based in-service training program for the five southern California counties: Imperial, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego.

In 2007/08 SFY PCWTA has delivered:

- 240 days of Line Worker core for 300 trainees.
- 6 days of Manager core for 20 trainees.
- 16 days of Supervisor core for 50 trainees.
- 143.5 days of Advanced classes for 3500 trainees.
- 2 Training for Trainers for 40 trainers for PCWTA.

These classes total 407.5 days of training with 3910 trainees/trainers.

## **Significant Accomplishments**

- Participated in committees and conference calls to work on revisions of the Standardized Line Worker core classes.
- Participated in the STEC.
- Applied for and received the FY 2007/2008 CalSWEC Fairness and Equity grant. Completed grant curriculum, "The African American Father: the forgotten parent in Child Welfare Services." Presented curriculum at the annual Fairness and Equity Symposium.
- Implemented the written Trainer Development Policy & Procedure with new trainers and with trainers in place to ensure the highest level of training delivery.
- Worked with trainers to infuse the statewide themes (fairness & equity, evidence based practice, data and outcomes, engaging families and youth) in all PCWTA curricula.
- Piloted an advanced evaluation model in an advanced class, "Advanced Child Interviewing," by infusing an embedded evaluation in the curriculum.
- Delivered the first Interviewing Institute, a five day, skill-based series for child welfare line worker staff engaged in investigative interviewing in CWS.
- Developed a "scorecard" process for tracking PCWTA practice in the areas of training delivery, curriculum development and enhancement, trainer development, evaluation, budget, and staff training. Revised internal agendas to reflect scorecard categories.
- Updated PCWTA website to reflect the infused themes mentioned above, to make our list of available advanced classes easier to access, and update the site in general to reflect our mission and goals as they are today.

## **Changes**

Staff turnover: replaced Training & Curriculum Specialist III who retired which has enabled PCWTA to complete the additional duties related to the budget augmentation and program goals. The Training & Curriculum Specialists (three .80 FTE's) act as liaisons with the southern counties to ensure we are meeting county needs and addressing the training demands in their SIPs of each county.

## **Barriers**

The last quarter of fiscal year was impacted by county reactions to the projected budget cuts to Child Welfare Services and the subsequent effect on training. Training needs continue at high level for staff in place particularly with the imminent distribution of the All County Letter related to training expectations for all staff in CWS.

## **Plans for the Future**

Continue to enhance how PCWTA respond to the needs of the counties by refining the communication via the roles of liaisons, the improved focus of our quarterly Training Planning Committee meetings with training partners in the five southern counties, and meeting regularly with Children's Directors. This effort includes an ongoing relationship with our training partners in the Academy network as well as within the counties.

PCWTA is working with the counties on looking at alternative training delivery models to better blend the cognitive training experience with practice. This means a more focused look at transfer of learning in and out of the classroom as well as allowing for expanded opportunities for on-the-job experiences during the line worker core timeframe. This focus will include an expanded development of a Transfer of Learning tool for use beyond the classroom but relating to each Line Worker Core subject. PCWTA is continuing the focus on moving the evaluation processes to a higher level by the transfer of learning emphasis mentioned above as well as on ongoing refining of evaluation methods. The latter is in concert with evaluation experts contracted with to examine this process.

PCWTA is going to be updating and revising the Manager Core series to better reflect the overall changes in Child Welfare practice reflected in Supervisor Core and Line Worker Core standardized elements. This will be a collaborative effort including trainers of Manager Core, county management representatives of the counties and PCWTA staff.

Having participated extensively in the PQCR's with the counties, PCWTA will be focusing very specifically on the training needs identified in that process and ensuring that the counties accomplish their goals in that regard.

PCWTA will more fully develop the Trainer Forum model to expand a more hands-on approach with the trainers to ensure they fully understand and can infuse more effectively the statewide themes listed above.



## **Inter-University Consortium-Los Angeles County (IUC)**

<http://iuc.sppsr.ucla.edu/>

The Inter-University Consortium Department of Children and Family Services (IUC/DCFS) Training Project continues as a collaborative endeavor between DCFS and the graduate social work programs at California State University, Long Beach (CSULB), California State University, Los Angeles (CSULA), University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), the University of Southern California (USC), California State University, Northridge (CSUN), and California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH). The overall goal of this collaborative project is to increase the professional skills and knowledge of Los Angeles County public child welfare workers. Through specialized training centers located at each university (with the exception of CSUN and CSUDH), the Training Project provides in-service training to newly hired social workers, case-carrying social workers, supervisory social workers, and management staff. The IUC also provides generous stipends and specialized training to up to 16 Master of Social Work (MSW) students at each university who intern at DCFS, receive specialized child welfare training as part of their MSW course work, and commit to a year employment at DCFS after graduation. To date, more than 600 individuals have received IUC stipends to support their MSW training. The IUC/DCFS Training Project is coordinated by a centralized staff that serves as the liaison between DCFS and the universities, conducts evaluation of training activities, operates the Training Project's data system, and coordinates activities affecting all four universities.

The IUC has developed a range of methods for evaluating the training that is offered to DCFS. At a minimum, all trainings are entered into the IUC Training Data System (TDS) for accountability and monitoring of deliverables under the contract. The TDS is the primary data management system used by the Consortium and DCFS, and serves as the principal data source for coordinating and monitoring the performance of the IUC/DCFS Training Project. The IUC assesses participant reactions to training in almost all presentations, generally assessing satisfaction, trainees' perceptions of learning in the training, and its applicability to the job situation. Assessment of knowledge learned by new workers in the CSW Core Academy has been conducted for many years through pre- and post-Academy training evaluation. In 2004, the IUC initiated the assessment of knowledge learned by staff in system-wide training, including Strength-Based Family Centered Practice, Concurrent Planning, Kinship Caregiver Training, and Team Decision-Making. The latter two continue in 2008. In 2005, the IUC initiated evaluation of knowledge and skill in key priority areas, and now include Legal Foundations, SDM, Kinship Caregiver, Court Report Writing, Child Maltreatment Identification (Physical), Child Maltreatment Identification (Sexual), Family Engagement in Case Planning and Case Management, and Placement and Permanency.

- The IUC presented 156 training classes to 3,956 staff through February 28, 2008; between March 1 and June 30, 2008, approximately 100-150 classes are planned. DCFS presented 303 training classes to 5,946 staff through February 28, 2008, and approximately 100-150 classes are planned for the remainder of the year.
- Six new worker eight-week CSW Core Academies have been delivered and six more are planned. In all, some 350 new staff will have been trained.
- Three, 3-week Human Services Assistant Academies have been delivered and two more are planned. Approximately 140 new staff will have been trained. Training in major

initiatives in support of department program outcomes have or will be delivered. Highlights of these include, but are not limited to:

- SDM (refresher, 2.0 upgrade, etc): 9 presentations to 158 staff with more planned.
- TDM Facilitator Training: 2 five-day trainings to 23 staff, with more being planned for each region.
- TDM Reinforcement Training: 20 presentations to 387 staff with more planned for each office.
- Full Disclosure Interview Training: 19 presentations to 548 staff with more planned for each office.
- Management training on various initiatives and department outcome priorities (Family to Family, TDM, Title IV-E Waiver, etc.) have been offered to 173 managers with more being planned.
- Court Report Writing Training: 14 classes were delivered to 414 staff following CSW Core Academy with more planned.
- Continued Training on Points of Engagement: Team Based Service Delivery Model.
- Ongoing SCSW Core Training and In-Service training as needed to fill/support promotions to Supervisor.
- Selected E-Learning Modules that have now been made available to staff, including ICWA, Substance Abuse Issues and AB 490 Training, etc.
- Large scale Management and Community Partner Training Events on the Title IV-E Waiver.

The IUC/DCFS partnership continues to provide vital training support to our large/complex child welfare workforce; managing high numbers of new hires with the roll outs of major initiatives to support improved practice. IUC has seen solid success in efforts to provide increased training support for supervisory rank and file and plan to continue these efforts for the coming year. The continuing goal in partnership with the line operations leadership is to improve supervisory training, coaching, and support. We also plan to continue efforts to further implementation of core strategies and initiatives. DCFS and its training partners continue to focus on ways and means to strengthen transfer of learning for accountable managers and supervisors to support the application of what is learned in training to the field.

The CDSS and its stakeholders also are now rigorously working together to implement Title IV-E Waiver for California and for Los Angeles County. IUC is working closely with the leadership in this new fiscal environment to support practice improvements that are so critical to outcome achievement.

### **California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC)**

<http://calswec.berkeley.edu/>

The CDSS partners with the CalSWEC to facilitate the integration of education and practice to assure effective, culturally competent service delivery to the people of California. CalSWEC, based at the University of California, Berkeley, is the nation's largest state coalition of social work educators and practitioners. It is a consortium of the State's 19 accredited social work graduate schools, the 58 California county departments of social services and mental health, the CDSS, and the California Chapter of the National Association

of Social Workers. In addition, the AOC (JRTA), project staff serves as a liaison to CalSWEC. CalSWEC is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the following projects:

### **The Regional Training Academy Coordination Project**

In this project, CalSWEC supports the CDSS in its mission to improve training throughout the state by coordinating training efforts, sponsoring trainings and symposia, and developing statewide curricula.

Highlights for SFY 2007/2008 include:

- Co-chaired (with the CDSS) the Statewide Training and Education Committee (STEC), which coordinates statewide training initiatives and oversees the development of statewide curricula.
- Facilitated the continued implementation, evaluation, and improvement of the standardized common core training for newly hired line workers and supervisors. CalSWEC provides funds and coordinates curriculum development for all of the common core. With the implementation of the Framework for Evaluation of Training, CalSWEC also coordinates the evaluation of the core, including data analysis and reporting.
- Planned and facilitated the Eleventh Annual National Human Services Training Evaluation Symposium held May 21-23, 2008. The Symposium is widely known as the premier national event for training evaluation in the human services field.
- Planned and facilitated the Sixth Annual Symposium on Fairness and Equity Issues in Child Welfare Training. This was held April 16-17, 2008 and was a forum for the training community to present and discuss the issues of culture, fairness and over-representation in child welfare.
- Planned and co-sponsored (with the Children and Family Policy Institute) a symposium on evidence-based practice in child welfare, held January 28, 2008, with the aim of infusing research evidence into child welfare practice via training and education.

### **Plans for the future:**

- STEC will continue to provide coordination and oversight of the child welfare training system.
- Curriculum development activities are ongoing, and the Common Core Curricula will be revised systematically, integrating practice changes and training evaluation results.
- Symposia will be convened to address Training Evaluation, Fairness & Equity, and Evidence-Based Practice issues, as well as other emerging areas of child welfare practice.
- Innovative training delivery models will be developed, with a focus on promoting transfer of learning and delivering training in e-learning format.
- Practice-oriented research will be used to inform training and curricula provided across the state.

### **California's Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Project**

Through the Title IV-E Project, the CalSWEC coordinates and supports Master of Social Work (MSW) programs in the State's 19 accredited schools of social work, as well as Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) programs in six of the member schools. The number of MSW students enrolled during the 2007-2008 academic year totaled 714. An additional 14 students were on temporary leave from the program, and 12 students are completing their theses. The six BSW programs enrolled 58 students during the 2007-2008 academic year, with an additional two students on leave and one student whose graduation is pending.

The participating MSW programs include the following 15 California State Universities: Bakersfield, Chico, East Bay, Fresno, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Northridge, Sacramento, San Bernardino, Stanislaus, Humboldt, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, and Dominguez Hills, which will start its first class in fall 2008. Two University of California schools (Berkeley and Los Angeles) are included, as well as two private schools (University of Southern California and Loma Linda University). CSU, Long Beach also delivers distance education programs at the Channel Islands and San Marcos campuses. The participating BSW programs are at the following California State Universities: Chico, Fresno, Humboldt, Long Beach, San Bernardino and San Diego.

The MSW programs, each of which follows a specialized child welfare curriculum, are designed to increase the number of professionally-trained social workers in the public child welfare workforce, as well as increase the ethnic diversity of the workforce. The BSW program offers a child welfare concentration in the senior undergraduate year and prepares graduates to work in entry-level public child welfare positions. Students commit to a number of years of employment equivalent to the number of years for which they received aid. Priority for financial aid is given to current county employees and persons who reflect the populations they serve. The Title IV-E project also conducts program evaluation activities.

This year has been a planning year for the evaluation team. Two major parts of the evaluation are being developed. First, approval has been obtained from the UC Berkeley Office for the Protection of Human Subjects to pursue the long term evaluation of the career paths of MSW Title IV-E graduates who are 5+ years post graduation. The process of gathering surveys from the 1,589 eligible graduates began in March 2008. Second, another round of the Statewide Workforce Study occurred in spring 2008. This recurring study was last completed in 2004. This time plans are underway to survey all individual child welfare workers, supervisors, and managers to assess educational level, case assignments, and other variables that would demonstrate that we are making progress toward raising overall workforce educational levels by offering concrete opportunities for degree education.

The MSW program at California State University, Stanislaus, under a special contract with CalSWEC, has spearheaded a full-time effort to recruit students from California's Native American communities to the Title IV-E Master of Social Work program. This is part of the ongoing contract and training efforts with CalSWEC. The goal of the program is to improve the perception of both leaders and youth in the Native American community about the role of

the university, and more specifically to promote the relevance of social work in their lives and the value of a career in public child welfare.

Highlights for SFY 2007/08 include:

- California State University, Dominguez Hills, joined the CalSWEC consortium as the 19<sup>th</sup> participating University and is planning to admit the first Title IV-E student cohort beginning in the fall 2008.
- Continued support and development of the Title IV-E BSW Project, including ongoing development of process and program evaluation components. This year CalSWEC continued meetings of the BSW Planning Group.
- Continued the revised online version of the New Graduate Survey, an annual survey in which recent graduates are asked to examine the relationship between their academic programs and their work in the field of public child welfare.
- Planned and facilitated the Title IV-E Student Day, an annual conference of MSW and BSW students enrolled in the Title IV-E programs throughout the state. This conference, coordinated by a team of MSW students, provides current and former students with the opportunity to learn clinical and theoretical approaches utilized in the field of child welfare that are not necessarily taught during the traditional academic calendar. The 2008 conference theme was: "Emerging Trends: The Future of Child Welfare." Prominent among workshops offered were topics related to cultural competence and effective service delivery to Native American families and children, as well as, to drug-endangered and traumatized children.
- Revised the MSW California Public Child Welfare Competencies, last modified in 2002, through an inclusive statewide process involving state and county partners, social work faculty at member schools and IV-E Project Coordinators. The current revision updates the 2002 version and reflects current practice. The educational competencies are also woven into training models utilized in the CA Regional Training Academies and the Inter-University Consortium in Los Angeles.
- Initiated a series of web-based educational presentations on selected Public Child Welfare curriculum topics and offered them to IV-E Project Coordinators, University faculty, and County and CDSS staff, managers, and supervisors. Four such presentations were completed in 2007-08.
- In partnership with the CWDA's Human Resources Committee, performed a survey of security clearance practices affecting child welfare social work internships and employment among the 58 counties. The purpose of the survey is to prevent the loss of field placement and employment opportunities for IV-E students and graduates due to unclear or inconsistent county clearance practices.
- In partnership with the University of Southern California and Tribal STAR at California State University, San Diego sponsored a Faculty Institute to advance the dialogue between California Schools of Social Work and Tribal communities. The Tribal STAR Faculty Institute creates an opportunity for social work educators and trainers to present effective curriculum content for working successfully with Tribal communities.

Highlights of the Survey of Graduates:

- CalSWEC maintains a master list of the IV-E students and graduates and their status. The schools track their own data and send it to CalSWEC on a quarterly basis. CalSWEC

then incorporates this information into an annual report which is in the process of being compiled, and upon completion will be send to the state.

- Graduates and alumni of this project have been employed in 51 of the 58 counties and with state adoptions.
- Graduates have a broad and diverse ethnic and cultural background, as well as, considerable language diversity. Forty-one percent of the MSW graduates and fifty-one percent of the BSW graduates in the program reported speaking at least one language other than English.
- Two-hundred-twenty (75%) of the Title IV-E MSWs who graduated in the 2006-2007 academic year found employment in 38 of the 58 counties.
- Thirty-two Title IV-E BSWs graduated in the 2006-2007 academic year and seventeen of these graduates are employed in five different counties.
- One hundred-forty-four Title IV-E MSW graduates completed their payback obligation years to public child welfare during the 2006-2007 academic year. These MSWs are from earlier multiple cohorts.
- Eleven CalSWEC BSW graduates have completed their work obligation in public child welfare.
- The numbers of IV-E MSW graduates who remained in public child welfare after they completed payback has averaged 82%, based on all graduates who completed their work obligation in public child welfare from 1996 through 2007, and responded to the CalSWEC Retention Survey.

#### **Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice (RCFFP)**

<http://humanservices.ucdavis.edu/resource/>

The Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice supports the continuum of services to families from prevention, intervention with vulnerable children and their families, to juvenile justice with a focus on strengthening families through family-centered practice approaches. This includes supporting child abuse prevention councils throughout California, providing mandated child abuse reporter training, Family to Family, family group decision making, integrated services, Wraparound Services, and training for juvenile probation placement officers.

RCFFP has:

- Developed a nine-day training program for juvenile probation officers. The training covers legal and regulatory requirements related to delinquent minors placed in IV-E eligible placements, including: required face-to-face visits, safety, strengths and needs assessments, case planning, transitional independent living program plans, concurrent planning, youth and family engagement, termination of parental rights and permanency planning for youth. Four regional trainings were conducted by June 2008 for approximately 90 deputy probation placement officers from throughout the state. Customized training for probation to support permanency, teamwork, case planning, youth and family engagement, and required visits has been conducted in 3 counties for approximately 100 officers.
- Delivered a one-day training regarding the responsibilities of juvenile probation departments regarding abuse of youth in placement in 1 county for approximately 35 officers.

- Delivered a three-day curriculum for juvenile probation placement supervisors throughout the state for approximately 100 supervisors and managers from 15 counties.
- Delivered a one-day training for probation department managers regarding IV-E services and requirements with emphasis on case planning, face-to-face visits, permanency, and federal outcomes for approximately 70 probation managers from 15 counties.
- Developed and delivered a workshop for bench officers regarding permanency, with an emphasis on adoption, for juvenile justice youth for a statewide judicial conference.
- Conducted training in Family Centered Practice topics (including strengths based training for social workers) for 1 county and for 40 participants.
- Wraparound Training for 9 counties with 280 participants was provided throughout the state.
- The Fifth California Wraparound Institute was held in June 2008 serving an estimated 1,200 participants.
- Participation in site reviews for Wraparound services in four counties: Los Angeles, Ventura, Orange, and Kern.
- Five trainings for TDM leaders were conducted with a total of 75 participants. Four convenings to provide training to groups of counties implementing Family to Family were conducted with a total of 370 participants. One statewide California Family to Family Convening was held in June 2008, with an emphasis on educating foster youth for up to 500 participants.
- Integrated services training has been provided to 3 counties with 455 participants on such topics as basic orientation and coordinated case planning.
- Enhanced a nine-day training program for parent partners working within child welfare services. Parent partners are parents whose families have successfully reunified with their children and are part of the team in partnership with child welfare social workers to provide support, mentoring, role modeling, education, and training to other families involved with child welfare.
- Support Family Group Decision-Making through training in 3 counties to 200 participants.
- Provided asynchronous web based training for mandated reporters of child maltreatment to approximately 2,600 participants. This training educates mandated reporters about the legal definitions of child abuse and neglect, their legal mandate to report, and the protocol for reporting training.
- Worked in partnership with the Office of Child Abuse Prevention for the development of the Regional Coordinators for Child Abuse Prevention Councils. These eight coordinators provide direct support for the development of child abuse prevention councils in each of the 58 counties.
- Developed and delivered a one day California Child Abuse Prevention Summit to 300 participants that included topics such as fatherhood involvement, substance abuse prevention, and the role of child care in preventing child abuse and neglect.

### **Significant accomplishments**

- Lead the standardization of practice in juvenile probation placement through training, technical assistance, and a standing advisory committee that brings together probation professionals from throughout the state, the AOC, the CDSS, and the Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice.

- Developed a Code of Ethics for Parent Partners in collaboration with an advisory committee of active parent partners from throughout the state.
- Widened the support for child abuse and neglect prevention through opening the annual Summit for Child Abuse Prevention to a broader audience and with varied topics.

## **Plans for the Future**

### **Juvenile Probation Placement Officers:**

Revision and enhancement of the nine-day training for placement officers regarding youth placed in Title IV-E placements. Special emphasis is placed on developing relationships with families, involvement of family, youth, and care providers in the development of the case plan, concurrent planning, and permanency planning. Continuing to provide the placement core; two day intensive training regarding parent engagement, case planning, concurrent planning, and permanency planning; three- day placement officer supervisor training and one-day manager training throughout the state. Additional customized training will be provided to support achieving state and federal child welfare outcomes as requested by counties. Development and delivery of training focused on parent and youth engagement and other relevant topics identified by the statewide survey and the probation advisory committee.

### **Family Group Decision Making:**

The Resource Center will continue to provide requested training for local child welfare agencies implementing family group decision making. A survey of all counties regarding their use of family group decision making in child welfare is being completed. The survey will identify the possible barriers to implementing family group decision making and an assessment of the needs of child welfare agencies to include family group decision making as a part of the services they make available to families. Training and technical assistance that can address these needs will be developed in response to the needs identified.

### **Family-focused Practice:**

Training and technical assistance focused on the skills and behaviors that reflect family-focused practice in order to achieve state and federal child welfare outcomes. Training will be delivered to social workers, supervisors, and management staff from a strength-based perspective of building on their past and current practice skills.

## **Fiscal Academy**

The purpose of the UCD Fiscal Academy contract is to provide program and fiscal academy training for county agencies that serve and/or support children and families by providing participants with the fundamentals of child welfare services funding, allocations, claiming, and budgeting. The training also introduces new changes in federal and or state law that impact both programmatic and fiscal management policymaking at the state and local level.



The Fiscal Academy Training includes but is not limited to the following items listed in the syllabus:

- Building the State Budget
- Federal Funding
- CWS Allocation
- The Time Study
- County Expense Claim (CEC)
- Tools for Fiscal Management
- Budgeting

### **Allowable Title IV-E administrative functions the training activity addresses**

Some of the IV-E Administrative training addresses items related to the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) of 2005 such as; administrative cost for a child placed with a relative for the lesser of 12 months or the average length of time it takes for a State to license or approve a foster home, administrative cost when a child moves from an unallowable facility to a licensed or approved foster family home, and or IV-E administrative cost for children who meet the foster care candidacy.

### **Setting**

The training occurs at the UCD Davis campus and in other locations throughout the state.

### **Training duration/Approximate Number of Days/Hours of Training Activity**

Four (two-day) sessions. Session times are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily. Total number of training days is eight days and fifty-six hours for this contract. There are approximately 240 participants for all four sessions (sixty participants per two-day session).

### **Training Activity/Provider Training Activity**

A two day training course and a one day workshop forum provided by The Center for Human Services, UC Davis Extension University of California, who contracts with Eileen Stern, instructor and retiree as an Administrative Services Director for the county of Santa Cruz. Ms. Stern has over 20 years of experience in human services.

### **Target Audience**

Provide continuing information and training to deputy directors, program managers and fiscal officers of child welfare services, as well as directors, program administrators and fiscal officers of other county departments such as mental health and probation. CDSS Fiscal and Program staff also participates in this training.

### **Total Cost Estimate**

Contract amount is \$255,956.65 per year.

## **Cost Allocation Methodology**

These activities will be cost allocated to the benefitting programs. The actual class training, syllabus, and targeted groups will be considered when determining the benefitting programs. Furthermore, the discount rate will be applied to IV-E qualifying activities.

Prior to claiming, separate supporting documentation will be prepared that provides additional details regarding allocation to benefitting programs in accordance with OMB A-87.

## **Description of how training meets goals and objectives**

Participating counties shall have the knowledge and skills to better use their combined resources to achieve better outcomes for children and to provide ongoing funding to evidence-based programs that support these outcomes. Participants in the academies shall leave with a solid foundation in how the child welfare and foster care funding stream works, its limitation, and opportunities.

## **Number of students**

Approximately 240 or 60 per session.

## **Significant accomplishments**

This is very useful training information for county program and fiscal staff. Providing this information annually keeps staff up-to-date on state and federal budgetary issues and concerns.

## **Changes**

- The fiscal/programmatic training for the Karuk Tribe is a separate effort that is not conducted through the Fiscal Academy Training Courses.

### **A. brief, one-paragraph syllabus of the training activity**

A portion of the UCD contract amount was utilized to provide training to Karuk Tribal staff. This training focused on federal Title IV-E eligibility requirements to Karuk social services staff and management i.e., staff development. The training agenda is as follows:

#### **Overview of Federal Eligibility**

Purpose

Removal and Placement

Court Orders

Linkage Determination

AFDC Eligibility

Federal Requirements for Payment of Federal Foster Care

Facilities Eligible for Payment

**Documenting Eligibility**

FC 2, FC 3, FC 3A, SOC 158A, SOC 155

Verification of AFDC Eligibility

Redeterminations

Other

Scenarios

**B. indication of the specifically allowable Title IV-E administrative functions the training activity addresses**

The training for the Karuk tribal staff received through the UCD contract did not focus on Title IV-E administrative functions, the training focused on the Title IV-E eligibility process including topics such as licensing/approving foster family homes, court orders, linkage to AFDC-FC and re-evaluations of federal eligibility. Training also included the use of State forms to document federal eligibility.

**C. indication of the setting/venue for the training activity**

Setting/venue for the training activity - Karuk Tribal offices located in Yreka, California.

**D. indication of the duration category of the training activity (i.e., short-term, long-term, part-time, full-time)**

Small group training, short term, may receive additional training as needed.

**E. indication of the proposed provider of the training activity**

Training will be provided through The Center for Human Services, UC Davis Extension University of California.

**F. specification of the approximate number of days/hours of the training activity**

Total number of training days is two.

**G. indication of the audience to receive the training**

This contract may provide continuing information and programmatic training to Tribal staff and leaders on an as needed basis.

**H. description of estimated total cost**

Karuk Training is included in the UCD Contract Scope of Work, the total contract amount is \$255,956.65 per year.

**I. cost allocation methodology**

These activities will be cost allocated to the appropriate benefitting programs.

## **Plans for the future**

- Develop a multi (three-year) contract verses a one year contract.

## **Foster and Kinship Care Education Program**

Training of Resource Families (foster parents and kinship/relative caregivers) is provided through an interagency agreement between the CDSS and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. This Foster and Kinship Care Education program is conducted by California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and approximately 64 local community college partners statewide as required by state statutes. Training is geared to those who want to become licensed foster parents, approved relative caregivers, and in some cases adoptive parents. This training is designed to develop and support caregivers to enhance their ability to promote the health and safety of children and youth placed in foster care.

The education/training sessions include, but not limited to, these topics:

- Overview of the child protective system.
- Age-appropriate child development.
- Effects of child abuse and neglect on child development.
- Caregivers' role in the family reunification or permanent placement process for foster children and youth.
- Health issues in foster care.
- Accessing education and health services available to foster children.
- Safety issues regarding contact with birth parents.
- Permanency options for children in care.
- Emancipation and independent living.
- The right of a foster child to have fair and equal access to all available services, placement, care, treatment and benefits, and to not be subjected to discrimination or harassment on the basis of actual or perceived race, ethnic group identification, ancestry, national origin, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental or physical disability, or HIV status.

Currently, the existing pre-service training is designed around the mandated topics of training according to Health and Safety Code section 1529.2. It includes a minimum of 12 hours of training before the placement of a child in the licensed foster home, and a minimum of 8 hours of in-service training per year. The number of hours of training required varies from the minimum of 8 hours to over 30, with most counties requiring 12-to-18 hours of pre-service training for foster parents. It is estimated that over 20,000 hours of training will be provided by community college Foster and Kinship Care Education Programs. The unduplicated number of foster and kinship care providers served will exceed 15,000.

## **Significant accomplishments**

- Many of the colleges are now providing focused classes on the educational rights of foster children and youth, the role of the care provider in the court process, and facilitating permanent connections for foster youth.

- The community college Foster and Kinship Care Education program collaborated with University of California, Davis to provide Training for Trainers sessions and curriculum tools to prepare foster and kinship care providers to care for foster teens with babies per legislation passed in California.
- Many of our programs are also working on educating care providers about the transition of foster youth to college and employment when they age-out of the foster care system.

## **Changes**

- Added new or additional classes and topics including but not limited to those listed above.

## **Barriers**

- Lack of adequate funding and lack of child care for foster parents and kinship care providers attending training.

There has been a proposed across-the-board 10% cut in funding for SFY 2008/09. In terms of child care for foster and kinship parents during the training, the lack of adequate funds determine that the focus continues on the costs of providing direct training, even though the importance of concurrent child care needed to attend the training is recognized.

## **Plans for the future**

- Efforts will be made to maintain the existing program offerings through further collaboration with other agencies and to seek additional increases when the fiscal situation in the state improves.

## **Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program (formerly Options for Recovery Perinatal Program)**

Please refer to "Foster Care/Adoption Recruitment Plan Section" for update.

## **Specialized Training for Adoptive Parents (STAP) Program**

This program provides specialized recruitment, training and services to pre-adoptive/adoptive parents of children born HIV positive and/or substance exposed. The program is designed to assist the adoption of medically fragile children who are dependent children of the court, have an adoption case plan, and reside with pre-adoptive or adoptive parents. There are currently 9 counties participating in the Program (Monterey, Santa Cruz, Shasta, San Luis Obispo, Mendocino, Riverside, El Dorado, San Francisco and Santa Clara).

In Monterey County in SFY 2007/08, 45 families received one-on-one training by mentor parents, and 78 families attended group trainings. Santa Cruz County offers training and support groups in English and Spanish on the adoption process, mental health issues for infants and young children, ADHD and drug exposure. In SFY 2007/08, 240 people received monthly training and support. Shasta County trained 50 people in SFY 2007/08.

Monterey County has a successful model mentor program, in which mentors are selected by the adoption staff and are experienced foster and adoptive parents who have raised adopted children with special needs. San Luis Obispo County organizes an annual retreat, which doubled in participant numbers from the prior year. Santa Cruz County has also developed a mentoring component to a program providing specialized care for adoptive parents. In Monterey County all mentors have completed Purposeful Visitation training to support birth parents and establish guidelines for successful parent-child visits. In a continuing effort to provide broad-based training, Santa Cruz County has increased efforts to obtain, train and direct mentors as service providers. Shasta County began a television recruitment campaign that features a child on Monday's news program who is seeking a concurrent planning family for the child. They are also recruiting potential families by running commercials on the local television channel. Pictures of children are also placed in the Shasta County Heart Gallery. The photos are located throughout the county and on their website.

## **Barriers**

Participating counties have reported barriers, including the loss of caregiving families due to attrition. Some of these families were homes that finalized an adoption and no longer chose to do foster care. There is also a struggle to provide respite care to meet the need of families. Obtaining referrals to the program for eligible caregivers is a barrier. San Luis Obispo County overcame a significant barrier to provider participation by making child care available on-site during training classes. Counties are developing new policy and training procedures for families and mentors, and new collaboration opportunities. For example Santa Cruz is developing innovative ways of generating referrals and to increase and improve outreach to kinship providers. Shasta County has experienced difficulty getting social workers to create placements with concurrent planning families during the reunification process. This was solved through training and education; the establishment of a concurrent planning multi-disciplinary team; and by the creation and support of adoptive and pre-adoptive parent liaison support groups.

## **Evaluation**

The State has not evaluated STAP. The CDSS monitors the STAP program through on-site reviews and technical assistance.

## **Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment Training (CATT)**

<http://www.cattacenter.org/>

The contract with CATT expired on June 30, 2007. In order to maximize training dollars and avoid duplication, the OCAP did not choose to renew the contract or go out for bid, as the training topics offered by CATT were also offered through other sources such as the Strategies contract and local providers.

## **Wraparound Parent Partner Project**

The CDSS/CPFSB has continued to be committed to strengthening the role and support of the parent partners in our statewide Wraparound Programs. CDSS collaborated with Parents

Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc. on a joint project to identify needs and supports for parent partners in statewide Wraparound Programs from July 2006 through June 2007. Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc. established a 19-member Wraparound Work Group, including parent partners, county and provider Wraparound management and program staff, national Wraparound Initiative representatives, and CDSS staff to assist with all tasks relating to this project.

## **Accomplishments**

The following was accomplished during the past fiscal year:

- **Developed and Administered Parent Partner Survey Tools:** Online Survey Tools were developed to gather information on the Parent Partner role, training needs and supports from Wraparound county coordinator/administrators, program staff and Parent Partners. The surveys were posted on the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc. website from January 1, 2007 through February 28, 2007.
- **Analyzed Survey Results and Developed Report:** A total of 211 surveys were completed. Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc. staff compiled the results of the surveys and developed a written report on the findings. This report can be viewed on the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc website at:  
<http://panetwork.parentsanonymous.org/asp/a9I/SurveyFindings.pdf>
- **Conducted Wraparound Summit:** A one-day Summit was held on June 5, 2007 to review the survey results with SB 163 Wraparound Program representatives and seek further input and recommendations.

Many innovative ideas were recommended through the surveys and input received at the Summit. During SFY 2007/2008, CDSS decided to move forward with two key recommendations to strengthen the critical role of the parent partners within California Wraparound Programs. These recommendations were to:

- Establish an Outcomes Work Group that would design a fidelity tool to measure core competencies of the parent partner role in relationship to the Wraparound model.
- Establish a Training Work Group that would focus on collecting information on training curricula for parent partners. These two work groups have been meeting monthly via teleconferences to move forward in carrying out their work plans.

**Outcomes Work Group** - This work group has been developing documentation to define the role and clarify the activities of the parent partners. They have utilized two key documents developed by the National Wraparound Initiative-Ten Principles of Wraparound and Wraparound Phases and Activities. In February 2008, the work group completed a draft of a Role Description for the Parent Partner. This new role description delineates the needed skills of a Parent Partner to successfully carry out their responsibilities. Once this Role Description is finalized and approved by CDSS, the work group will begin developing a fidelity tool that will measure a Parent Partner's adherence to 4 or 5 core competencies. The work group is also planning to look at what outcomes to measure (e.g. child and family outcomes, mental health outcomes, critical incident outcomes) and then make recommendations on existing tools that may be used. Plans are to present the work group products and recommendations

were presented at the 5<sup>th</sup> Statewide Wraparound Institute in California scheduled in June 2008.

**Training Work Group** – This work group has been focusing on gathering information on training curricula for parent partners currently being used by Wraparound programs in California counties. A standardized tool was developed to help work group members gather this information from each county. Once this information is gathered, the work group plans to develop recommended training standards for parent partners based on the knowledge and skills needed to effectively carry out their roles. The work group will utilize the skill sets identified in the role description developed by the Outcomes Work Group to develop the training standards. They will also look at other resources such as the two newest national Wraparound Initiative draft documents entitled Phases and Activities of the Wraparound Process: What the Family Partner Contributes; and The Application of the Ten Principles of the Wraparound Process to the Role of Family Partners on Wraparound Teams. This work group also made a presentation at the 5<sup>th</sup> statewide Wraparound Institute.

- The Governor proclaimed February 2008 as California Parent Leadership Month;
- All members of the California State Parent Team attended the California Child Abuse Prevention Summit and had the opportunity to network and share California Parent Leadership experiences with other state and county representatives.
- The Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc. has enhanced collaboration and communication between Parent Leaders and Child Abuse Prevention councils throughout the state.

### **Future Plans**

Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc. continues to provide evaluation information and will be submitting a proposal seeking continued OCAP funding into SFY 2008/09.

### **Family Support Training Model/Family Resource and Support Training and Technical Assistance Project (“Strategies”)**

[www.familyresourcecenters.net](http://www.familyresourcecenters.net)

The Family Support Training Model/Family Resource and Support Training and Technical Assistance Project (Project) provides training and technical assistance to prevention/early intervention-focused family resource centers (FRC) and family support programs throughout California through a network of three regional training centers known as “Strategies.” Strategies is located in three distinct regions to facilitate providing services throughout California.

### **Accomplishments**

This year Strategies has:

- Presented 6 (all-day) peer review sessions to 27 FRCs from 19 counties.
- Held training sessions and workshops that were attended by 3,680 participants.
- Received average ratings of 4.5 out of 5 for their training session/workshops.



- Coordinated and implemented the Peer Review Process, which consisted of one full day and a half-day follow-up with 9 FRCs participating from Orange, Riverside, Fresno, Kings, and Sacramento counties with an additional 24 participants in Strategies Sustainability Project engaged in a modified peer-review process.
- Co-sponsored/assisted in organizing statewide/regional conferences.
- Conducted 10 statewide teleconferences addressing FRC fundamentals and non-profit management issues that attracted 214 FRC registrants.
- Through the Family Development Matrix Project, Strategies provided 186 hours of training and 72 hours of technical assistance to 50 non-profits, and their child welfare partners, dispersed through 13 counties to assist in their efforts to successfully respond to Differential Response.
- Maintained a statewide e-mail listserv, "Strategies Announce, " that enables over 6,778 subscribers to network with each other.
- Piloted a new training (Family Economic Success), which is to be expanded into a 2 day training to include a comprehensive resource directory and a variety of practical tools for participants to use in their agency practice.
- Contracted with a different website provider to update the website, make it more user-friendly and to expand the data collection capabilities of the program.
- Received approximately 47,622 visits to the website.
- Distributed the "Working Strategies" quarterly newsletter to 25,372 subscribers, and posted each issue of the newsletter on the website.
- As of June 2007, a total of 44 family resource centers and family strengthening organizations completed the Sustainability Project and collectively received over 1,700 hours of individual and group technical assistance for capacity building. Sixteen organizations are participating in the SFY 2007/08.
- Included networking activities (i.e., interactive exercises) in all Strategies trainings.
- Provided training/technical support for the Supporting Father Involvement Study, including coordinating two-day long training sessions for staff implementing the Supporting Father Involvement Study.
- Assumed the coordinator role for the statewide dissemination of the Supporting Father Involvement research findings.

- Provided training and technical assistance (developing appropriate work plans, review protocols, orient new panelists, prepared reports) to citizen review panels located in Calaveras and San Mateo counties.
- Training sessions attracted over 2,500 participants from throughout California.
- Organized a day-long symposium entitled, "Transforming Central Valley Communities", which was a forum for bridging research to practice in working with agricultural workers and their children.
- Developed all day workshops on how to integrate elders and promote cross-generational support in Family Resource Centers.
- Developed a domestic violence training session for FRCs.
- Provided 1,016 hours of group technical assistance to 253 agencies in 44 counties.

The grantees have met or exceeded their objectives.

### **Future Plans**

Beginning July 1, 2008, Strategies will enter a new three-year funding cycle with the OCAP. In addition to continuing many of the current training and technical assistance activities, Strategies will:

- Review and update existing curriculum as needed.
- Develop transfer of learning (TOL) protocol and begin to integrate the TOL process and tools into new and existing trainings.
- Develop 6 new curriculums
- Expand existing and develop new working relationships with statewide and national organizations, including the California Evidence Based Clearinghouse, Prevent Child Abuse California, First 5 Association and Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) agencies.
- Co-sponsor a minimum of one event each year that promotes the implementation of promising practices within child abuse prevention.
- Implement the cultural competence plan developed by Strategies during the last grant cycle which includes a process for revisions to existing curriculum, staff development training and other goals as determined by an organizational assessment.
- Strategies staff will make a concerted effort to identify populations not previously served by participating in community, regional and state meetings/ events that highlight changing state demographics.

### **Special Start Training Program**

[www.mills.edu/specialstart/program.html](http://www.mills.edu/specialstart/program.html)

The Special Start Training Program (SSTP) at Mills College is funded by OCAP to provide a statewide training program for social workers, community professionals, foster parents, adoptive parents and relative care providers. It focuses on the developmental and behavioral needs specific to high-risk newborns, who are graduates of the newborn intensive care nursery. It is a unique, one-of-a-kind training program.

The core training program is called Family Infant Relationship Support Training (FIRST). In FFY 2002, the program began to offer FIRST, which is co-facilitated by a professional trainer and a parent trainer. The parent trainer is able to provide peer training and support which includes her experiences with her infant while in the neonatal intensive care unit. The program is presented in six parts starting with an Introductory Workshop (Day 1) that discusses the developmental issues for preterm infants and assisting parent/infant interactions. The Practicum (Day 2) is for those participants who wish to integrate assessment and interventions into their work with these infants and families. Mentoring and skills check days follow this level (Days 3 and 4) to determine independent and reliable use of the FIRST observation tool. Advanced clinical training (Day 5) is offered to those participants who have become proficient and additional education days are offered to all participants. Beyond these five levels, continuing education opportunities are also planned throughout the year.

In FFY 2007, 704 people throughout California attended a variety of training presentations (Day One, Day Two, Day Three, Birth-to-Three [aka. Pre-to-Three], and one-on-one guidance). Additionally, from October through December 2007, 114 people attended Special Start trainings; as well as from January 2008 through March 2008, an additional 120 attended the training workshops (Day One, Day Two and one-on-one guidance).

Specifically, from October 2006 through September 2007, the training workshops and one-on-one guidance included: "Special Start" Day One - Introduction (eight workshops), and "Pre-to-Three" trainings (two workshops), Day Two - Practicum (three workshops), Day Three – Mentoring (one workshop). One-on-one guidance was given on an on-going basis throughout the year, which included observation and intervention with foster parents and caregivers. A workshop entitled "Update on Medical Issues of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit" was given to graduate students at Mills College.

From October 2007 through March 2008, there were three Day one workshops, and on-going guidance to trainees. During this time, staff developed and presented at a conference related to NICU infants. Most recently the Co-Director presented three workshops at an Annual International Conference on "Developmental Interventions in Neonatal Care" (November 12-15, 2007).

The SSTP program included training foster parents and biological parents to prepare for the transition of medically fragile infants from one caregiver to another. The training instructed foster parents on engagement techniques with biological parents to promote individualized caregiver interactions. It also supported foster infant care during and after the transition period.

The SSTP website provides information that describes the training program, training resources in both English and Spanish and permits online training registration. Future plans in process, but not currently contracted, are to have the website expanded to provide training using the internet. This will enable training of a much larger audience.

Currently, the Special Start contract is in the process of being transitioned from Mills College to the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF).

### **National Council on Crime and Delinquency/Children's Research Center's (NCCD/CRC) SafeMeasures Reporting Service**

The contractor, NCCD/CRC, has designed tools and training, SafeMeasures, that support the CWS Outcomes and Accountability Review System. The training and tools are used to aid the counties and the CDSS in better understanding of data collection, analysis and reporting techniques aimed at ensuring compliance with Division 31 regulations, Titles IV-B and IV-E requirements, and improving state and federal outcome indicators. SafeMeasures provides counties with the tools and knowledge to conduct a more thorough assessment of their child welfare system, identify data trends and assist in the allocation of resources. CRC analysts provide both online and onsite technical assistance with the SafeMeasures application for counties on request.

Training is conducted by Children's Research Center staff in county offices statewide for social workers, supervisors and managers, and consists of a full day of training. CRC developed additional measures and has revised the Permanence Outcome Measures in SafeMeasures. A training curriculum has been developed.

### **Training**

To date, on-site training classes have been provided for Humboldt County involving a total of 30 students. Training emphasized state priorities: face-to-face contacts (Measure 2C), as well as, medical and dental visits. Local issues were addressed after state priorities were reviewed. Students were provided evaluation forms. The evaluation results indicated that the training was well received, relevant to their work, and met expectations.

### **Significant accomplishments**

At the request of CDSS, CRC produced reports evaluating the face-to-face contact compliance (Measure 2C) for the following counties: Solano, Sacramento, Glenn, Yuba, Mono, Siskiyou, San Benito, Alameda, Inyo, and Colusa. Eight of the reports have been submitted with two in the final stage of completion. The work included report production and contact with the subject counties.

A follow up session with Alameda county is pending final arrangements among county, CRC, and CDSS staff.

Per contract requirements; Kings, Nevada, San Luis Obispo, and Imperial counties were all contacted by CRC, at the request of CDSS, for assistance with selecting case samples for

the PQCR review. Imperial County sought CRC assistance, while King, Nevada, and San Luis Obispo elected to generate their own case sampling.

## **Changes**

The core contract requirement is for CRC to work with counties specifically to assist counties in improving their performance on face to face contacts, medical visits, and dental visits. In some instances, this has been best executed by synchronizing contract support with the PQCR process. However, CDSS recognizes that to meet its ongoing (and sometimes changing) priorities, exercising flexibility is important. At the request of CDSS, CRC completed a detailed face to face contact analysis of (Measure 2C) for 10 counties identified by CDSS. The change reflects CRC's commitment to be responsive to the growing and changing monitoring needs of CDSS.

## **Barriers**

The work requires coordination among CDSS, the county, and CRC staff and synchronization of service with the PQCR schedule. This has been a challenge and more difficult than anticipated. Consequently, CDSS and CRC have sought to provide outreach to counties based on relative compliance with state priorities, not just on the PQCR schedule. This appears to be a more promising and effective use of CRC services.

## **Plans for the future**

The next scheduled site visit is for Los Angeles County. CDSS realizes that Los Angeles County represents 40% of the state child welfare cases and overall state compliance rates cannot meet federal standards if Los Angeles County fails to meet those standards. CDSS recognizes that Los Angeles County presents special problems, and an effective response to those problems will positively impact state performance goals. The training will address state priorities and C-CFSR (Measure C1.4) "Return to Foster Care after Reunification" as a special concern identified by the county. Evaluation forms will be provided all students.

By June 30, 2008, additional site visits and special reports were completed as requested by CDSS.

## **Eastfield Ming Quong Family Partnership Institute (EMQ-FPI)**

<http://www.emq.org/EMQTraining/training/fpi/index.html>

EMQ-FPI provides onsite technical assistance to counties and provider agencies regarding various elements of a Wraparound program. This technical assistance is given by traditional classroom methods, open forums, or coaching and mentoring at the child and family team level. EMQ-FPI also assists CDSS to conduct site reviews of county Wraparound Services programs. The activities and expertise of EMQ-FPI contribute to CDSS's efforts to ensure Wraparound Services programs are successful and that fidelity to the model is maintained. Technical assistance is usually tailored to the individual needs and circumstances of a county or provider agency. Technical assistance typically occurs on-site and may include the following activities:

- Solution-focused technical assistance for counties as they develop and adjust Wraparound programs that fit the county's unique situation.
- Assistance for counties to start new programs or expand existing programs pursuant to the MHSA.
- Assess and/or respond to needs and requests from existing Wraparound programs that are at various stages of implementation.
- Participate in site visits to assess and strengthen a program's fidelity to the Wraparound model and standards.
- Provide coaching and mentoring at the child and family team level.
- Conduct open forums and other activities in order to facilitate discussion of specific questions or issues, as well as to consider systemic integration of Wraparound with other initiatives.

### **Accomplishments**

In spring 2008, EMQ-FPI facilitated a collaborative effort with counties to revise CDSS's standardized Wraparound curriculum. Since July 1, 2007, EMQ-FPI has provided 45 days of technical assistance for approximately 734 people.

### **Plans for the future**

EMQ-FPI continues to provide technical assistance on Wraparound to individual counties and provider agencies. They also continue to facilitate revision of California's Wraparound training curriculum. Additionally, EMQ-FPI assisted with the planning of the Fifth Wraparound Institute in June 2008.

### **CWS System Improvements Implementation**

The CDSS provides funding to counties for training CWS staff and selected county partners to ensure that the CWS System Improvements are successfully implemented. The three primary areas are:

- Safety Assessment
- Differential Response
- Permanency and Youth Transition

The first evaluation of the 11 Pilot Counties, including the Standardized Safety Assessment System was completed in June 2006. A second evaluation was completed in February 2008. The two tools that meet the requirements of the Standardized Safety Assessment System are the Comprehensive Assessment Tools (CAT) and the Structured Decision Making tool (SDM). All 58 counties had implemented one of the two sets of tools by June 30, 2007.

An essential component of the permanency protocols is family engagement. Family to Family counties were trained on the process of Team Decision Making (TDM). Training is provided through the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Stuart Foundation, or through the Regional Training Academies. As of December 31, 2005, 22 of the 25 Family to Family counties were using the TDM core strategy. San Diego County began their TDM rollout in January 2006, and Kern and Solano counties began implementing TDM in fall 2006. In addition, the statewide convening was held in January 2007. The convening was held to give California

Family to Family counties an opportunity to share their successful and innovative practices, as well as gather information from presentations that highlighted innovative domestic violence prevention practices throughout the country. The presentations included topics on strengthening relationships between child welfare services and domestic violence services; utilizing the core strategies to assure safety of all family members; and strengthening the alliances between child welfare services and domestic violence shelters.

### **Structured Decision Making (SDM)**

The purpose of SDM is to assist child welfare workers in assessing risk; to assist counties in targeting services to children who are at greatest risk of maltreatment and to improve outcomes for children and families such as the reduction of the recurrence of child maltreatment. Workers are trained to use the tools, which consist of a safety and risk assessment, family strengths and needs assessment, and reunification tools. The tools are used throughout the life of a case, from the intake at the hotline until the child is reunified with his or her family.

All SDM counties statewide have implemented the SDM Substitute Care Provider Assessment. Additionally CRC is working with eight counties to implement three additional assessments: SDM Support Assessment, SDM Provision of Care Assessment, and the SDM Placement Assessment. Training for trainers in the eight participating counties occurred in June and July 2008.

Training on the SDM tools is a two-step process. In California, child welfare workers are trained to use SDM by either attending a class at the Regional Training Academies or by being trained by county trainers. Workers gain an understanding of the philosophy and research behind SDM through the training. They learn to use SDM by examining and practicing each tool in the SDM model. The second step is to learn to use the web-based tools. Staff from the National Council on Crime and Delinquency's Children's Research Center conducts the training for trainers in each county. Supervisors and managers are trained separately, prior to line staff being trained. They are trained using an additional module, which includes conducting supervisory case reviews, producing and utilizing management reports, and motivating staff to fully utilize SDM.

In SFY 2007/08, CRC provided (36 days of on- site training/technical assistance to counties including collective or centralized on-site training/technical assistance such as core team, lead expert, trainer summit, and conference presentations. CRC also provided 31 training/technical assistance session hours using webinar. The Northern Regional Academy reported they delivered ongoing SDM training to 94 participants. The Inter-University Consortium - Los Angeles County (IUC-LAC) reported they provided SDM training for: 9 presentations to 158 staff.

The mandatory statewide common core curriculum for new child welfare workers includes a course on assessment for safety, risk, and protective capacity; SDM is being integrated into this course.

## **Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT)**

The Social Policy and Health Economics Research and Evaluation (SPHERE) Institute has developed an evidence-based Safety and Risk Assessment System for use in County Child Welfare agencies. The system, which has been implemented in thirteen counties (Amador, Colusa, Contra Costa, Glenn, Imperial, Mariposa, Mendocino, Napa, San Bernardino, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Sonoma and Stanislaus Counties), includes tools and methods of gathering and reporting data to document and support social workers' safety and risk assessment decisions. The purpose of the CAT is to create a standardized assessment approach, which supports consistency, fairness and equity in the process used to assess each child and family referred to a county child welfare agency. The components of the CAT include five safety and risk assessment tools for use at seven critical decision points in the life of a child welfare case.

Child Welfare workers receive standardized training at the Regional Training Academies and on-going specialized training for line-workers and supervisors. The SPHERE Institute provides ongoing support by conducting on-site training and technical assistance; working with county staff to support implementation; providing desk guides and other support material and facilitating User Group and Policy Committee meetings to guide ongoing development. A secure website is available to allow county workers to upload and download training materials, user guides, and meeting minutes. The website also allows counties to upload completed batches of CAT tools directly into SPHERE's database.

In SFY 2007/2008 SPHERE provided 56 person-days of on-site training and technical assistance to counties which includes site visits and training for a new release. Also, 62 person-days of collective or centralized on-site training and technical assistance such as steering committee meetings, trainer summits, and conference presentations (in-person meetings) were provided. There were 12 person-days of remote training and technical assistance sessions such as WebEx presentations and conference calls. An additional 96 person-days of training or technical assistance was provided including on-call support by telephone or email; technical support for CAT tools, data upload, and website access; and committee support and website materials. Policy Committee meetings with representation from each CAT county have taken place every other month beginning on September 6, 2007 and are currently schedule through November of 2008.

- a. A brief, one-paragraph syllabus of the training activity:

The SPHERE Institute provided training directly to eleven CAT counties on the implementation of the CAT safety and risk assessment tools. The training consisted of on-site training in field application of CAT tools to support the use of tools, on interpretation and use of analyses and reports in context of risk assessment practice and risk management system, and to train supervisory and management staff in the context of a safety and risk management system.

- b. Indication of the specifically allowable Title IV-E administrative functions the training activity addresses:



Assessed field application of assessment tools and data entry protocols, collected feedback and revised curriculum; evaluated evidence-based best practices identified through the development, implementation, and analysis of county risk assessment and risk management system and updated curriculum; updated training curricula based on CWS/CMS data analyses.

- c. indication of the setting/venue for the training activity:

In local county child welfare offices.

- d. indication of the duration category of the training activity:

Small group trainings, short term.

- e. indication of the proposed provider of the training activity;

Staff from the SPHERE Institute

- f. specification of the approximate number of days/hours of the training activity:

There were 56 person-days of training in SFY 07-08.

- g. indication of the audience to receive the training:

The audience was child welfare social workers and supervisors in the thirteen CAT counties.

- h. description of estimated total cost:

The estimated cost for this training was \$212,680 per year.

- i. cost allocation methodology:

These activities will be cost allocated to the appropriate benefitting programs.

**University of California, Berkeley – Performance Indicators/California Children's Services Archive**

<http://cssr.berkeley.edu/cwscmsreports/>

The Performance Indicators Project at the Center for Social Services Research (CSSR) provides timely and useful data to California counties regarding children in the CWS system. Through an interagency agreement with the CDSS, the CSSR receives quarterly extracts of data from the state's SACWIS system, CWS/CMS, and reconfigures and analyzes the data to produce information at the state and individual county level. Data is posted on the public website and most tables are updated quarterly. Data that is posted includes, but is not limited to, the national standards used in the CFSR review and its resulting PIP and additional outcome measures required by California's Child Welfare Outcomes and Accountability System (AB 636). In addition to statewide and county specific totals for many measures, data

are stratified and presented by age, race/ethnicity and gender. CSSR staff continue to provide training to many state and county staff in a variety of ways.

Training is administered through the provision of data, e-mail technical assistance on demand, telephone conference call trainings, and telephone technical assistance on demand. Numerous on-site trainings throughout the state in individual counties, at CWDA regional meetings, at CWDA statewide Children's Committee meetings and for CDSS staff are also held. Training is also provided to county administrators, managers, line staff and state administrators and managers. In addition, since the website is public, advocates, legislators and representatives from other agencies serving children and families have access to this information.

Since there are several types of training, durations vary. On-site visits typically include either half-day or full-day sessions. CWDA monthly meetings occur over two half-days each month. County specific conferences generally include half-day sessions. Webex/Phone technical assistance can be anywhere from a few minutes to an hour; telephone conference calls can be anywhere from one-to-three hours in length; and e-mail assistance is ongoing. All types of training are long-term.

Most on-site training is provided by Barbara Needell, MSW, PhD, Principal Investigator, on the Performance Indicators Project. In addition, Daniel Webster, MSW, PhD, Project Director; Emily Putnam-Hornstein, Graduate Student Researcher; and Joseph Magruder, Graduate Student Researcher conduct some on-site training.

Webex/Phone, e-mail, conference calls, and responses on demand are handled by Drs. Needell and Webster, along with several PhD Graduate Student researchers and the web person, Markus Exel.

Virtually all of the work on the Project is directly, or indirectly, a training activity. In addition to the time required to reconfigure, run, test, and post the data quarterly, staff spend much time creating training tools (e.g., PowerPoint presentations, Excel spreadsheets with graphs, etc.), and working with state and county staff to understand the data and use the of tools. Then, this acquired knowledge and skill is used to present data to other child welfare staff and community partners. This work has been extremely useful to county staff that has responsibility for data entry, and has resulted in improved data quality.

### **Significant accomplishments:**

County and state staff continue to improve in their ability to use data as an important decision making tool. CSSR is transitioning to a new, dynamic website that makes it much easier for staff to access publicly available data and have developed several new Excel spreadsheet tools that are training aids. CSSR continues to add new functionality to its website and develop new data tools. And there are no real barriers.

### **Plans for the future**

CSSR plans to continue training state and county staff transition to the use of the new CFSR data indicators/composites, as well as other state indicators, to transition all website material

to the dynamic site, to expand training on the issue of ethnic disproportionality and to encourage the ongoing linkage on process to outcomes.

### **CWS/CMS Training**

<http://www.hwcws.cahwnet.gov/training>

California's federal statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) is referred to as the CWS/CMS and is currently operational in all 58 counties and serves approximately 19,000 state and county CWS workers. A standardized statewide curriculum is available to all state and county staff working in the CWS program.

From October 2005 to December 2006, the approved California Multiple Award Schedules vendor, CGI-AMS, provided statewide CWS/CMS classroom training and included the following: New User Training, Business Objects Training/County Access to Data Training and County On-Site Refresher/Advanced Training. The previous bid process used the California Multiple Award Schedules (CMAS) which only allowed pre-approved vendors to bid. The procurement of a new vendor to provide statewide classroom training was selected through the Invitation for Bid process, opening the competition to a broader range of competitors and was awarded to The Software Automation Group in May 2007. This vendor's agreement was canceled without cause in September 2007 and an emergency contract was put in place with SolutionsWest Consulting. That agreement will be in place through July 2008. The CDSS announced a Notice of Intent to Award for a two year CWS/CMS training contract to AMBL Consulting Group, Inc. in June 2008. This is a replacement follow-on vendor contract providing statewide training for county and state staff in the use of the CWS/CMS, as well as report management software, Business Objects.

Many counties participated in CWS/CMS Statewide Training offered to staff May 2007 to September 2007 under "The Software Automation Group" and from September 2007 to present under SolutionsWest Consulting. The most recent data from, May 2007 to present shows that 74 days of New Users Training have been conducted with 164 participants, and Business Objects Training was conducted with 57 participants.

A separate CWS/CMS training allocation (CWS/CMS staff development) is provided to counties to train staff on how to use the CWS/CMS. Counties use these funds to provide local system training to new staff, staff whose functions within the program are changing, or special training to meet specific needs of county or individual staff members. Classes include both locally delivered training similar to that provided under the statewide contract curriculum, as well as locally determined training priorities, which may not be readily available at a statewide level.

Scenario Manager is a software-training tool that utilizes modules (scenarios) that simulate the CWS/CMS application. It is used in conjunction with the New User Statewide Curriculum and the New User Process Maps to complete the Skill Building Exercises. Scenario Manager simulates working through a process necessary to complete a job related task. It works within the parameters of scenarios developed to train a new user. It is a stand-alone application and is not host connected. Each county has the Scenario Manager Application on a CD that is provided by the CWS/CMS Project Office.

The Training Region allows participating counties to conduct training in a production-like environment where social workers, support staff, and other users can be trained on the use of the CWS/CMS Application. The Training Region provides the flexibility for each participating county to access county-specific caseload and resource data. In this environment, users are allowed to enter, add and delete data, and navigate as they would in the production environment without altering real data.

The CWS/CMS Training Unit develops, updates, and maintains all of the state's CWS/CMS training tools and materials, including the Statewide Training Application Resource, Online Release Notes and Quick Reference Guides. The standard training curriculum is maintained on the CWS/CMS website. Updates and maintenance is performed on an ongoing basis to ensure that training tools and materials provide statewide uniformity on how the CWS/CMS application should be used.

The Training Unit provides oversight of CDSS vendor contracts for statewide classroom training, manages the Training Regions and provides training for CWS/CMS trainers.

### **Training for Group Home Staff**

Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations requires group home staff be trained regarding the children served in the group home and requires the group home administrator to develop a training and orientation plan for group home staff. The regulations require the plan to have an overview of the client population served by the group home and training on the group home regulations. The training plan also includes training on the needs and services plan that is required for each child in care. Additionally, staff is to develop the needs and services plan based on the needs of the child as outlined in the case plan with the child and the placement social worker.

Licensing Program Analysts who visit these homes are required to examine a portion of the records to assess whether or not the homes are complying with regulation. If they are found to be out of compliance, they are written a citation with a corrective action to comply by a certain date. The CFSD does not have access to these records.

The group home must obtain written approval from the child's placement social worker on the needs and services plan. If the child is 16 or older, the needs and services plan incorporates the child's Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) in the case plan and outlines the group home role in meeting the child's goals in the needs and services plan. The CFSD does not have access to these records.

New group home administrators must complete 40 hours of training, which may include modules on the needs of transition age youth. Community Care Licensing reports that some vendors have offered these modules, but they do not have the information on the numbers of classes offered or the numbers of administrators trained. Similarly, continuing education for group home administrators may include this topic. The CFSD does not have access to these records. Licensing Certification exams are conducted by regional offices. Any records of how many persons have participated in these trainings would be in the Licensing Division's Regional Offices.

The child's social worker must meet the Manual of Policies and Procedures, section 30-504.1, Service Delivery Methods: "1. Independent living services shall be provided to all eligible youth, based on needs, services and goals identified in the most recently completed Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP)." The placement social worker and the group home staff work together to meet the child's needs as outlined when the child is placed in the facility.

Training for group home staff, foster parents and child welfare workers in group home placements are provided through several different ways. Community Care Licensing offices provide initial and ongoing training to group administrators, staff and prospective foster parents. The group home and foster home licensing application must outline what type of training will be provided to staff with regard to working with adolescents and preparing them for independence. The training is provided by internal or contracted professional trainers. In title 22 section 84065, it outlines the training hours that are required for initial and ongoing group home staff.

Additional training opportunities are available to child welfare and group home staff, and foster parents regarding the needs and services of working with transitional age adolescents. Opportunities are available to attend state training conferences, agency conferences and presentations in community based settings. CDSS hosts the annual ILP Institute where training opportunities are provided to all child welfare staff, including group home and foster family agency staff, and foster parents on topics related to transitional age youth and youth who have aged out of care. County social services agencies also provide local training opportunities to staff, foster parents, and adoptive parents on a regular basis.

### **Child Death Review Team Training**

During SFY 2006/07, the CDSS contracted with the Interagency Council on Abuse and Neglect (ICAN) for county and regional child death review (CDR) team training. ICAN provided training to child death review team members in multiple regions of the state. The training provided information to team members on properly identifying child abuse and neglect related deaths and review team processes.

The first three trainings were held Los Angeles, Contra Costa, and San Diego counties between the period of October 25, 2006 and March 21, 2007. Attendees included 302 people representing various professions including law enforcement, prosecutors, civil law, social services, health/public health, education, mental health, child advocates and others. At least 82 of the attendees were Child Death Review Team (CDRT) members representing various counties. Agenda items varied somewhat among each of the regional training sessions and included a variety of topics ranging from Suspicious Child Death and Severe Non-Fatal Injury Review to EMT/Paramedics as Integral Partners in Prevention and Child Death Review. A detailed listing for the curriculum was reported in the 2007 APSR.

A fourth training was conducted in Shasta in May 2007. There were 44 attendees of which 23 represented CDRT members. Agenda items included: Child Death Review in California: A Curriculum and Training Manual; Suspicious Child Death and Severe Non-Fatal Injury Review; Law Enforcement's Response to Suspicious Child Deaths and Injuries; Helping Professionals Deal with Child Injury and Death; Forensic Pathology in Suspicious Child Death Cases; The California State Child Death Review Council - Why We Are Here, Who's Who, and How We Can Help; Virtual Child Death Review - How Child Death Review Works; The

Importance of CDR Team Reporting NCFR Online CDR Report; Safely Surrender Baby Law – From Tragedy to Hope; Virtual Severe/Non-fatal Injury Review-What Could/Should have Happened; and EPIC Data.

The fifth and final training for SFY 2006/07 was conducted in Kern County on June 8, 2007. There were 27 attendees of which 19 were CDRT members. Agenda items included Child Death Review in California: A Curriculum and Training Manual; Suspicious Child Death and Severe Non-Fatal Injury Reviews; Helping Professionals Deal with Child Injury and Death; Virtual Child Death Review - How Child Death Review Works; Safely Surrender Baby Law – From Tragedy to Hope; The Importance of Child Abuse Councils on Child Death Review Teams; Responding Sensitively and Responsibly to an Infant Not Breathing Call; The Importance of CDR Team Reporting – NCFR On-line CDR Report; Neglect-The Silent Culprit; Child Abuse Investigation; Drowning Prevention Program; Virtual Severe/Non-fatal Injury Review-What Could/Should have Happened; and EPIC Data.

At each training event, a compact disc of the curriculum and training manual was distributed and the audience was instructed on how to find it on the ICAN Website.

### **Significant accomplishments of Training**

- Assisted CDRT members in accessing and using the CDR Curriculum and Training Manual.
- Created an abbreviated version of the CDR Curriculum and Training Manual, “At a Glance,” which was distributed to all training attendees.
- Assisted with the revitalization of CDRT, especially those that have been somewhat inactive for some time.
- Highlighted local heroes in each county.
- Representation from many counties at each training.
- Provided CDRT participants with networking opportunities.
- Provided presenters with expertise and relevance, who shared their experience and passion on a range of topics covered in the CDR Curriculum.
- Included Child Abuse Prevention Councils in CDRT and in training planning and presentations.
- Audience had positive response to information about how agencies and professionals work together to determine child abuse prevention efforts from the findings of review teams.
- Audience members expressed how training inspired them to learn more about and/or become more involved with CDR.
- Experienced a growing interest in subjects such as children’s grief, helping professionals who deal with death issues, the use of data, and communication with media.
- Increased marketing efforts, which included timely posting on website and multiple mass e-mailings to CDRT members in California.

### **Barriers**

While the CDRT training had many significant accomplishments during SFY 2006/07, it has become clear that a re-examination of the training focus and content needs to occur in order for the training to remain relevant and purposeful for the child death review team attendees and child welfare services staff alike. With the advent of SB 39 (Chapter 468, Statutes of

2007) in California, counties have increased responsibilities with respect to the disclosure of information for cases involving child abuse or neglect that result the fatality of a child. Additionally, there has been increased focus on achieving consistency in the classification of child fatalities among child death review team members and uniform operational definitions.

### **Plans for the Future**

As a result of these barriers, the CDSS in coordination with the Department of Public Health, DOJ and the Office of Emergency Services has begun to re-examine the focus of the training, the intended objectives, and any needed curriculum adjustments. During this reevaluation we will also solicit input from the teams so that we remain aware of areas of interest and need. It is anticipated that through this collaborative reevaluation process, a curriculum can be developed that is both purposeful and relevant and remains vital in helping professionals understand the death review process as a key to prevention.

### **Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) Training**

The CDSS plans to provide training when the new Interstate Compact *for* the Placement of Children replaces the current Interstate Compact *on* the Placement of Children. This will happen when the compact is adopted by and enacted into state statutes by at least 35 states (including California).

In the interim, the CDSS Out-of-State Placement Policy Unit (OSPPU) schedules quarterly regional meetings with northern and southern California ICPC liaisons. These meetings provide the opportunity for CDSS to consult with county staff and clarify ICPC requirements.

- The CDSS OSPPU provides a forum for ICPC training for county ICPC liaisons through the Quarterly ICPC Regional Meetings referenced above, which includes sharing information from the Annual Conference presented by AAICPC through American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) or other information shared with OSPPU by APHSA.
- The CDSS ICPC Deputy Compact Administrator or representative attends the Northern California Placement Committee meetings on an as-needed basis to share information directly with placement workers.
- Additionally, staff from OSPPU are continually available by telephone, email and facsimile to provide technical assistance to parties involved in the interstate placement of a child.
- Finally, the CDSS OSPPU continues to provide on-going technical assistance to county welfare, mental health and probation staff for the out-of-state group home placement of children.

### **Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA) Training for County Liaisons**

- The CDSS OSPPU provides on-going technical assistance to county ICAMA liaisons by sharing information from the Annual Conference presented by APHSA or other information shared with OSPPU by APHSA.
- The American Association of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (AAICAMA) through APHSA previously released ICAMA training on CD at its annual

conferences. The CDSS/OSPPU refers counties to APHSA to obtain a copy of ICAMA training, on CD, if needed.

- The CDSS/OSPPU staff provides on-going training and technical assistance by telephone, email and fax to county ICAMA liaisons as needed.
- OSPPU works daily with DHCS staff, who process the actual paperwork for incoming ICAMA cases. During the next year we will work together to identify county ICAMA training issues and determine how best to address any identified training needs (i.e formalized training, question and answer letters, ACL, etc.).

### **Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP)**

This training is allocated to Title IV-B (100% PSSF funds).

The KSSP promotes the well-being of children and families by providing funds for the planning, start-up, and expansion of county kinship support services programs. These programs provide community-based family support services to relative caregivers and the court-dependent children placed in their homes, and to relative caregivers of children who are at risk of dependency or delinquency. Training and technical assistance is provided to county and non-profit personnel operating KSSP sites so that they can provide the most effective and efficient services to children and their relative caregivers that will result in improved outcomes related to safety, stability, permanent placements, and the well-being of children and their families.

Nineteen counties currently operate a KSSP and eight counties are engaged in planning activities for potential operation of a KSSP in SFY 2008/09. The training provider, Edgewood Center for Children and Families, conducts training and technical assistance at KSSP or county sites within each of the 27 counties. The training provider also conducts two conferences per fiscal year – one in northern California and one in the southern region of the state.

A one-day training for the eight KSSP planning counties was held on November 9, 2007. Each county with an existing KSSP, all new start-up counties, planning counties, and any interested county without a KSSP program attended a one-and-one-half day KSSP training January 31-February 1, 2008 in Sacramento. One day training for all KSSP counties is scheduled for June 4, 2008 in Los Angeles.

In addition to the one-day training events, training and technical assistance is provided by telephone, email, other written means, and via onsite visits on an ongoing, as-needed basis. Training and technical assistance is also provided related to data collection and reporting activities. Approximately 350 hours have been dedicated to those activities from July 1, 2007 through March 31, 2008. An additional 100-120 hours of training and technical assistance, approximately, was provided from April 1 to June 30, 2008, for an approximate total of 450 – 470 hours during SFY 2007/08.

### **Significant Accomplishments**

Training and technical assistance was increased by serving three additional start-up counties and eight additional planning counties for SFY 2007/08.



## **Changes**

The same provision of training and technical assistance continues to be provided as in prior years, but the number of training activities increased (see above). Over the last two years the number of counties implementing a KSSP increased from 11 to 19. It is anticipated that the eight current planning counties will start-up their programs in 2008-09 for a total of 27 participating counties.

## **Barriers**

Although the number of participating KSSP counties has increased substantially, the level of funding (\$4 million) has not kept pace with program growth and is not expected to increase due to the current budget climate.

## **Future Plans**

To continue providing the same level of training and technical assistance to KSSP counties and to conduct outreach efforts that will increase the number of counties participating in the KSSP.

## **NOTEWORTHY PROJECTS, CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIUMS**

### **The Independent Living Program (ILP) Training Institute**

The annual Independent Living Program (ILP) Institute provides an array of ILP related information and training. The Institute offers a wide variety of workshops related to the provision of services required under the federal John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. Participants included county ILP coordinators, foster parents, county social workers, county probation officers and other stakeholders.

The Institute was held April 21-23, 2008 in Ontario, California. There were approximately 300 attendees. This year's Institute focused on compassionate and effective ways to serve transition age youth. This year also offered even more workshop sessions which covered a greater spectrum of topics including:

- Permanency.
- Employment.
- Transitional housing.
- Education.
- Probation.
- After care services.
- Mental health services.

Attendees at the Institute had the opportunity to:

- Learn about promising practices from experts from across California and the United States.

- Work together to explore and develop effective solutions.
- Network with others who help and assist transition aged youth.

Attendees participated in focused group sessions for foster parents, independent living coordinators, and transitional housing coordinators.

### **Annual ILP Teen Forum**

The CDSS sponsors a Teen Forum for foster youth, ages 16-18, to provide them with an opportunity to learn more about independent living skills, housing resources, educational and employment resources and eligibility for the Former Foster Youth Medi-Cal Program. This year, the Foster Club All-Stars were featured; the group travels throughout the country and members share information about their personal experiences in an effort to improve the lives of youth in foster care.

This annual event provides youth with a unique opportunity to network with other youth throughout the state. The forum was held June 26-28, 2008 on the Pomona State University campus. Approximately 200 youth and sponsors attended this event.

### **Beyond the Bench Conference XVIII: Access and Fairness**

Over 1,100 juvenile dependency and delinquency professionals attended this annual statewide conference in December 2007. This multidisciplinary conference featured "Forty Years After *In re Gault*," a Fred Friendly seminar which focused on the rights of juveniles in delinquency court. Participants had the opportunity to see a one-woman play, *Someone's Somebody*, about the true-life struggles and triumphs of a former foster child. The conference also offered 40 workshops including the ICWA and 4 symposia on juvenile justice, child abuse and neglect, mental health, substance abuse, education, and community engagement. CDSS staff who served as faculty include: John Wagner, Director of CDSS, Glenn Freitas, Chief, Children's Services Operations & Evaluation Branch, and Lawrence Bolton, Chief Counsel and Deputy Director for the Legal Division.

### **Annual California Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Conference**

The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Statewide ICWA Conference was held in June 2008 in Visalia, California. It was hosted by Big Sandy Rancheria, located in the central valley in Auberry, California. The mission of the conference is to promote positive partnerships and collaboration between tribes and federal, state and local governments for the benefit of all Indian children. The conference included a presentation on collaboration by Terry Cross, Executive Director of the National Indian Child Welfare Association; various workshops regarding ICWA, SB 678 – California ICWA requirements, the Native American Rights Fund's Guide to ICWA, using expert witnesses in ICWA cases, traditional/customary Tribal adoptions, etc. The CDSS provides \$25,000 from the State General Fund to partially support the Annual Statewide ICWA Conference.

## **The Judicial Council of California's Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Initiative**

Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) Center for Children and Families support CDSS' commitment to the full implementation of ICWA by providing technical assistance to county child welfare and probation staff, judges, judicial staff and county counsels on the requirements of the Act. This initiative is funded by the CDSS. The AOC will develop protocols to assure complete understanding of ICWA and will facilitate education by a broad-based group of subject matter experts on a statewide, regional and local basis. The ICWA Initiative is promoting improvements in compliance with the ICWA by making available a range of cross discipline facilitation and educational services. These services provided by the ICWA Initiative staff and outside consultants and are tailored to meet the needs of the local county or region.

The cost for the training is \$260,000 and is fully funded by the state General Fund. The technical assistance is provided at the local court or other community sites, depending on the size of the audience. Subject matter workshops are conducted regionally. This long-term training is provided by AOC staff and outside subject matter experts. For a description of specific training activities conducted by the Judicial Council, see the Indian Child Welfare Act Initiative section under ICWA.

### **Tribal Youth**

(<http://theacademy.sdsu.edu/TribalSTAR/welcome.htm>)

Funded by the US DHHS ACYF, Children's Bureau, the intent of Tribal Successful Transitions to Adult Readiness (STAR) is to ensure that Tribal foster youth are connected to culture, community, and resources as they successfully transition to adulthood. Tribal STAR provides interdisciplinary training for providers who work with Native foster youth. In addition, communities are also offered technical assistance to aid them as they work to build collaborative relationships and implement the training.

As an interdisciplinary training program, Tribal STAR training is designed for all tribal youth service providers, including: Native American professionals and leaders, public human service agency staff, regional training academy staff, Master of Social Work (MSW) students, and others who provide services to Native American foster youth. Topic areas covered in the training include: Tribal values and culture, collaboration, youth development philosophy, protocol, and ways to effectively address the needs of Native American foster youth.

### **Training/Technical Assistance**

Tribal STAR provided the Creating Connections Training for Trainers (T4T) series. Creating Connections was a two-day event devoted to improving local services for Tribal foster youth by providing training and skills building. Day 1 was a Summit of Tribal and non-Tribal providers who discussed the current challenges and identified solutions to providing services. Day 2 was a T4T and focused on skill building to lead cross-cultural discussions that result in positive outcomes. Over 100 trainees participated in this series that was facilitated in Riverside, Foresthill, and Redding during the months of July and September, 2007.

On September 12, Tribal STAR hosted the Fourth Annual Tribal STAR Celebration. Over 70 community supporters, workgroup members, and partners attended this special event. Highlights of the event included the honoring ceremony for those who have worked to improve outcomes for Tribal foster youth, several accounts given by attendees of improved collaborative efforts within the community, and the premier of the new Tribal STAR digital story, *Wakeem's Story*.

On March 5, Tribal STAR presented the Creating Connections training at the Southern Indian Health Council in Alpine. The interdisciplinary trainee group of 47 represented several agencies from Southern California, including foster family agencies, county mental health, office of education, health and human services agency, and several Tribal agency representatives. The intent of this training was to address Native American history and Tribal youth's cultural needs. Several important connections were made and new working relationships were established.

The main focus of Tribal STAR's efforts during the reporting period was the development and dissemination of materials for the MSW programs.

Tribal STAR developed 3 modules designed to fill a standard 1.25 hour course session with a combination of lecture and interchangeable activities designed to increase awareness of American Indian history, values, and culture as they relate to policy, human behavior, and generalist practice. Each module includes a format to accommodate guest speakers from the field, and is also intended to increase MSW Students' awareness of fairness and equity. The module titles are:

- The Impact and Limitations of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).
- Understanding the Effects of History upon Culture and Behavior of American Indians.
- Considerations for Culturally Sensitive Social Work Practice.

Innovative elements of these modules include:

- Optional lecturette or guest speaker formats for each module with culturally specific outreach suggestions to find Tribal representatives for the classroom.
- Interchangeable segments and activities allow for time flexibility.
- Discussion and activities that explore cross cultural application.
- Optional homework assignments that encourage community engagement.
- Provides recommendations and skill building that cultivate collaboration.

In preparation for the development of these modules, Tribal STAR hosted two focus groups: one for the Tribal community/partners and one for current/former MSW students. Tribal STAR piloted all modules in MSW classes to a total of more than 60 students. In collaboration with California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) and University of Southern California (USC), School of Social Work, Tribal STAR disseminated materials including: training materials, a resource CD which included the modules, and a digital story DVD to over 200 students that participated in the Statewide MSW Student Day. Additionally, Tribal STAR facilitated two workshops based on MSW modules to 50 students. Over 40 participated in the Faculty Institute that occurred on April 4 at USC. Faculty from across California gathered to advance the dialogue between schools of social work and tribal

communities. Tribal STAR created an opportunity for social work educators and trainers to experience curriculum content specifically for working successfully with tribal communities.

### **Significant accomplishments**

Evaluative Outcomes: From the satisfaction surveys, Tribal STAR has received a satisfaction rating of 4.73 out of a possible 5.00. From the Tribal STAR training, 77% of participants showed an increase in knowledge or retained their knowledge of the subject matter. Tribal STAR has shown that through the training program, transfer of knowledge can assist in facilitating successful networking and collaboration. It is through this networking and collaboration that positive outcomes can be achieved for tribal foster youth.

Completion of the Digital Story Series: This series provides some insight into how the tribal community has been affected by foster care. There is one entitled *Paul's Story* (a biological parent's story). *Wakeem's Story* about a former foster youth who accesses services from the Regional Center, a service center for the developmentally disabled, has had a long-term mentor and recently reconnected with his aunt from the Pit River tribe. Lastly, there is *Justine's story* which is told from the perspective of a former foster youth regarding the impact of being removed from her culture. These digital stories were developed and disseminated to participants of the T4T series, attendees of the Statewide Student Day, and the Faculty Institute.

Development of the Checklist for Judges: When an Indian child is lost in the child welfare system it damages the child, the tribe, and the tribal community. This checklist has been developed to help judges determine the best circumstances surrounding placement of a child in a non-Indian home to strengthen the potential for a successful outcome. The list was developed as a result of focus groups conducted with Tribal community members, including youth, Tribal gatekeepers, and culture bearers. It was developed in an effort to create concrete recommendations for judges, probation, child welfare, and other staff involved in placement and case planning and who are aware of the importance of ensuring that Tribal children and youth have continued contact with their traditions, culture, and families while they are in the child welfare system.

Development of the *Other Side of ICWA*: Tribal STAR collaborated with the Public Child Welfare Training Academy (PCWTA) to develop the *Other Side of ICWA* training curriculum, which increases awareness of key cultural issues that occur when child welfare services social workers and ICWA workers are working with a tribal youth. The curriculum addressed three key components: trust building in a cultural context, proper identification of a Tribal youth by using the Naturalistic Inquiry method, and the identification and access to resources for Tribal youth in the system.

SIP/PQCR Collaboration: Representatives from the San Diego County Child Welfare Services Policy and Program Support office helped the local Tribal ICWA and Social Service programs from Indian Health Council, Southern Indian Health Council, Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel, and the Intertribal Court of Southern California understand current and future plans as providers to tribal youth. This meeting occurred as a result of the Tribal STAR Team providing leadership in bringing the County and Tribal community to the table. As a result, several action items were agreed upon, including future methods for ensuring that future

System Improvement Plan (SIP) related activities are planned and facilitated in a more culturally appropriate manner. San Diego County's Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR) took place during the week of April 21-25. In preparation for the PQCR, Tribal STAR assisted with the facilitation of a community focus group and participated in the review of Tribal cases.

## **Changes**

None to report at this time.

## **Barriers**

In an effort to bring the Tribal STAR training to the Los Angeles area, Tribal STAR conducted several phone conferences with the Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services (LA DCFS) and the tribal coalitions within the Los Angeles area. The LA DCFS and tribal coalitions are engaged in an ongoing discussion regarding ICWA training and ensuring that the training models used are reflective of the tribal community and are culturally appropriate. Several from the DCFS as well as a member of the Tribal coalition participated in the Southern Region T4T (July 2007). In addition, the entire Indian Unit from DCFS attended the Tribal STAR Fourth Annual Celebration (September, 2007). This is an indication to us that the need for training such as Tribal STAR is significant and that there may be future opportunities to assist the Los Angeles community.

Tribal STAR received several technical assistance requests during this reporting period. Many of these requests reflect a need for: increased understanding of resources and processes among those providing services to tribal foster youth, training, and additional tools to bridge the gap between the tribal and non-Tribal child welfare communities. As a team, Tribal STAR addresses each request; weighing the level of response with our current contract. It has become quite clear to us that were we to respond to the majority of the requests; we would need a financial allocation at least twice what we are currently receiving. Therefore, we are tracking these requests to ensure that future program efforts reflect community need and are financially feasible.

## **Plans for the future**

Initially funded by the ACYF, Children's Bureau, for the FFYs 2003/2008; Tribal STAR is nearing the completion of the initial grant. Initial objectives have been completed, significant outcomes have been achieved, and Tribal STAR continues to receive requests for additional training and technical assistance. We are in the process of developing a sustainability plan. Based on data gathered from technical assistance requests gathered during the last several years and from a community needs assessment, Tribal STAR is developing a sustainability plan that is tailored to the needs of the community. Recognizing that the need for training and technical assistance continues to grow within the Southern California (CA) region, as well as, throughout the entire state, the sustainability plan contains three models. The first model is tailored to Southern California, the second model would be tailored to an urban region, and the third model would provide Tribal STAR training and technical assistance at the statewide level. In the process of identifying private foundations and continuing the discussion at the state and federal level to ensure that Tribal STAR is funded to continue training and technical

assistance that ensures positive youth outcomes and supports the county child welfare agencies and state in achieving PIP and SIP objectives.

### **Tribal STAR Faculty Institute**

In partnership the University of Southern California and Tribal STAR at California State University, San Diego sponsored a Faculty Institute to advance the dialogue between California Schools of Social Work and Tribal communities. The Tribal STAR Faculty Institute creates an opportunity for social work educators and trainers to present effective curriculum content for working successfully with Tribal communities.

### **Native American Social Workers**

The Master of Social Work program at California State University, Stanislaus, and the Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Project under a special contract with the CalSWEC, has spearheaded a full-time effort to recruit students from California's Native American communities to the Title IV-E Master of Social Work program. This is part of the ongoing contract and training efforts with CalSWEC. The goal of the program is to improve the perception of both leaders and youth in the Native American community about the role of the university and, more specifically, about social work in their lives, and to promote the value of a career in public child welfare.

## **COUNTY STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING**

Counties provided various levels of in-service training to all their staff, which is described in an annual training plan. Counties are required to adhere to the Staff Development and Training regulations contained in the CDSS' Division 14 of the Manual of Policies and Procedures. These regulations serve as a guide to county welfare departments in the administration of county training programs. Division 14 provides the mandate and structure of county accountability in the development and implementation of training programs, annual training plans, evaluation and training need assessments. These regulations establish claiming and cost reimbursement criteria and guidelines for allowable staff development cost and activities.

## **ADDITIONAL TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS**

### **Multi Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA)**

The Northern California Children and Family Services Training Academy updated the curriculum regarding the Multi Ethnic Placement Act so that it is available for use throughout the state for existing and new state and county adoptions workers. This training is available online.

### **County Counsel/Social Worker Joint Trainings**

The purpose of this training activity is to further the IV-B Plan Training and Staff Development Goal of workforce preparation and support Goal V: Prepare and support the workforce to help

children and families reach positive outcomes through multi-disciplinary training regarding permanency. This goal is achieved by providing:

- Specific training on case planning as related to reunification and other permanent plans.
- Training emphasizing respective participant roles in achieving systemic permanency goals.

This training activity falls under the following category necessary for the administration of the foster care program: preparation for and participation in judicial determinations.

These training activities are short-term. The duration of specific training programs varies according to type of training offered and audience served. The trainings will be coordinated and overseen by the AOC; and the AOC will contract with statewide and local training providers with experience in the specific subjects being covered by the trainings.

Trainings have been conducted in Imperial, San Joaquin, and Stanislaus counties. The number of attendees per training is as follows:

<b>County</b>	<b>Total Attendees</b>	<b>Social Worker Attendees</b>	<b>County Counsel Attendees</b>
Imperial	43	70%	9%
San Joaquin	98	66%	8%
Stanislaus	52	79%	4%

### **Significant Accomplishments**

This year's trainings have been enormously successful so far, with particularly positive feedback from social workers. Social workers have reported that they benefitting tremendously from working closely with both agency and parents and minor's counsel on trial preparation, including development of case theory, and skills practice. Listed below are some participant comments highlighting strengths of the training:

- "One of the best continuing education sessions I've attended since law school."
- "Much better understanding of attorney functions."
- "Course helped me in desensitizing some of my fear to testify in court."
- "See both sides of attorney and social worker opinions."
- "As a new worker, this training was very helpful and informative."
- "Very effective in providing in-depth thoughts and in giving valuable information."
- "Role play provoked nervousness but demystified process and helped me to gain skills and better testify."
- "Wonderful to have both attorneys and social workers and the different roles each play";
- "Provide insightful methodology of case assessment"
- "Playing other roles makes you think out of the box."
- "I think this is a great collaboration between attorneys and social workers to work together for the bigger picture, the "Children and Families."



## **Changes**

Last year's training plan focused on case planning as related to reunification, adoption, and other permanent plans. This year's focus is on the effective use of courtroom advocacy to advance permanency goals. While related, there is a different emphasis in this year's training – the vehicle for advocacy last year was out-of-court activity, while this year the focus is more on preparation for and the actual court process. Both years have included a heavy focus on the interdisciplinary nature of permanency work, with the trainings emphasizing respective participant roles in achieving systemic permanency goals.

## **Barriers**

There are two extremely innovative aspects of this year's training program. These innovations have been strengths, but also present real challenges. First, the training is an interdisciplinary court-practice program, meaning that the focus is on both lawyers and social workers and their respective roles in the court process. This has proven to be both a true strength of the training program, but also a challenge. It can be difficult to balance the differences in skill sets, experience, and focus reflected in our training audience. The second innovative aspect of the training is that it takes place in one-day, as opposed to the multi-day format of all other court-practice focused training programs. While significant time and energy has been put into the development of a one-day agenda, there is still a sense that it is not enough time for all participants to fully engage. The last barrier is not related to innovations, but rather to a core component of any court-practice training – skills and drills. Many attendees, primarily attorney attendees, balked at the role playing component of the training.

A sample of participant comments highlighting program challenges is provided below:

- "Not enough time to prepare."
- "Everyone hates role playing."
- "Need more time."
- "I felt it was more applicable and focused for attorneys rather than social workers."
- "We were not adequately prepared for our roles."
- "Trial skills should be lengthened and made more rigorous perhaps through a two-day training."
- "During the second session an attorney's comments made it difficult to process and come to our own conclusions as a group."

## **Plans for the future**

A 2008-2011 proposal for courtroom advocacy permanency training has been submitted; many of the county teams and training participants have identified this as a critical training need.

## **Judicial Review and Technical Assistance (JRTA)**

Technical assistance is provided for judges, referees, commissioners, court clerks, probation and county welfare department staff on Title IV-E Foster Care requirements. The JRTA staff consists of 5.5 positions including a supervising attorney. JRTA staff attends all quarterly

project planning sessions and project updates with CDSS. JRTA staff participates in meeting with County Welfare Department and County Probation Department staff as appropriate which consists of discussing promising practices in permanency issues, such as: finding life-long connections for youth, engaging youth in dependency process, concurrent planning, and prioritizing permanency for youth, ADR methods, Family to Family models, termination of parental rights and adoption.

The JRTA attorneys continue to provide technical assistance and training related to permanency through continued research, development of curriculum and maintaining relationships with local, state and national experts. Future technical assistance and training will focus on working collaboratively with dependency and delinquency court judges and county agencies in the areas of ILP, transitional housing and finding connections for foster youth. In addition to expanding these services to delinquency court system stakeholders, they will be made available statewide as resources permit.

## **TRAINING EVALUATION**

The following outcomes were planned from July to December 2007 and have been met:

- Data from the common core evaluations have been collected and analyzed by CalSWEC. Reports are generated as the data is received, and are used to inform curricula revisions and improve delivery of the training.
- With new training regulations going into effect starting July 1, 2008, CalSWEC convened a Tracking Training Convening in February 2008. The convening brought together county teams and RTA staff for the purpose of: 1) assisting county staff in gaining an understanding of the state's expectations regarding tracking training and reporting of training efforts, and 2) assisting county staff in aligning existing tracking training systems to meet new state regulations, while also meeting the needs of other agency management functions.

## **Background**

The CDSS uses a multi-pronged approach to the evaluation of training programs. To address the ever-increasing importance of evaluating training activities, the Macro Evaluation Team was established. The membership is comprised of representatives from the CDSS, county staff development organizations, RTAs, the Resource Center for Family Focused Practice (RCFFP), and the Inter-University Consortium (IUC) in Los Angeles. The Team is charged with making recommendations about statewide CWS training evaluation that includes the development of a statewide training evaluation framework, as mandated by California's PIP. Counties and RTAs can also access training from CalSWEC and national experts in training evaluation via the Macro Evaluation Team. This evaluation framework was first applied with the introduction of the common core curricula training for new child welfare workers and supervisors.

The framework addresses assessment at seven levels of evaluation, which together are designed to build a “chain of evidence” regarding training effectiveness. These levels are:

- Level 1: Tracking attendance.
- Level 2: Formative evaluation of the course (curriculum content and delivery methods).
- Level 3: Satisfaction and opinion of the trainees.
- Level 4: Knowledge acquisition and understanding of the trainee.
- Level 5: Skills acquisition by the trainee (as demonstrated in the classroom).
- Level 6: Transfer of learning by the trainee (use of knowledge and skill on the job).
- Level 7: Agency/client outcomes - degree to which training affects the achievement specific agency goals or client outcomes.

Establishing that training is effective and lays the groundwork for tying training outcomes to program outcomes. This is being done by the field as a whole.

Benefits of implementing a framework for training evaluation:

- Data about the effectiveness of training at multiple levels (a chain of evidence) can be used to help answer the overall question about the effectiveness of training and its impact on child welfare outcomes.
- Data about training effectiveness is based on rigorous evaluation designs.
- Curriculum writers and trainers have data focused on specific aspects of training, allowing for targeted revisions of material and methods of delivery.
- Evaluation provides a standardized process for systematic review and evaluation of different approaches to delivery of training.

For the time period, 7-1-07 through 6-30-08:

### **Significant accomplishments**

The total number of subjects who have participated in the evaluations of common core curricula since its inception is 3,578.

- A decentralized tracking training system, implemented by the counties with assistance by the RTAs, has been designed to track attendance at training.
- Knowledge tests continued to be administered by the RTAs/IUC and analyzed by CalSWEC for the initial and revised versions of the common core curricula with standard content. New or revised versions of knowledge tests were implemented for the following curricula: *Critical Thinking in Child Welfare Assessment: Safety, Risk & Protective Capacity; Child & Youth Development in a Child Welfare Context; Family Engagement in Case Management and Case Planning; and Placement and Permanency*. Information from the preliminary analyses was used to refine the curricula and test materials.
- To date about 165 (or 63%) of the total 262 multiple choice test questions have been piloted in actual tests, as a result of test revisions for several core curricula. The majority

of the piloted items appeared to perform adequately enough to continue without revision. However, some multiple choice test items were revised for use with knowledge tests (based on feedback from RTAs/IUC), with the goal of creating a bank of items that reflects current core curricula, and which can be used interchangeably. This will enhance the validity and the security of the items, and allow for flexible use of different items at different sites.

- Embedded evaluations continued to be administered by the RTAs/IUC and analyzed by CalSWEC for the initial and revised versions of the common core curricula with standard content AND standard delivery. New or revised versions of embedded evaluations were implemented for the following curricula: *Child Maltreatment Identification, Part I: Neglect, Emotional Abuse, and Physical Abuse*; *Child Maltreatment Identification, Part II: Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation*; *Casework Supervision* (Supervisor Core).
- Course-level evaluations of both the *Child & Youth Development in a Child Welfare Context* and *Child Maltreatment Identification, Part II: Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation* were administered by RTAs/IUC during the July – Dec 2007 pilot period of these curricula. CalSWEC collected and summarized these evaluations to inform the revision of these two curricula.
- CalSWEC facilitated the development and refinement of a protocol for revision of problematic knowledge test items that includes RTA/IUC input.
- CalSWEC created secure web pages on the CalSWEC website for training evaluation materials as a central resource for academy evaluation personnel. CalSWEC beta-tested these secure website pages during SFY 2007/2008.

## **Barriers**

Test item development and validation continues to be a lengthy process, which involves collecting data over a fairly long period of time. While the items that have been developed are performing very well, more test data is needed to complete a bank of validated items. This process is complicated by the fact that the curriculum has also been under revision.

## **Plans for the future**

- Training evaluation and curriculum revision is by design an ongoing process, and the evaluation and revision activities will continue beyond SFY 2008/09. The evaluation framework will continue to guide the ongoing curriculum development and revision process. This includes continued use of knowledge tests and embedded evaluations with common core curriculum trainees.
- The validation process continues for multiple choice test questions that are used for knowledge tests. Items will be updated to reflect revisions to common core curricula.
- An embedded evaluation will be developed for the *Critical Thinking in Child Welfare Assessment: Safety, Risk & Protective Capacity* curriculum that can be used with the assessment tools used by counties in California.

- As part of moving forward in the evaluation framework, evaluation of transfer of learning activities will be developed and integrated into common core and/or supervisor core curricula.

## **Evaluation and Technical Assistance**

## EVALUATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

### **Supporting Father Involvement (SFI) Study**

The CDSS entered into an Interagency Agreement with the University of California, Berkeley to conduct a study to: 1) determine the effectiveness of a particular intervention to increase positive father involvement and, 2) measure organizational culture change to determine if the family resource centers implementing the intervention become more inclusive of fathers in other programs and services. The intervention is being implemented in Santa Cruz, San Luis Obispo, Tulare, Yuba, and Contra Costa Counties. Grantees are the CWS agencies in these counties which are required to partner with a local family resource center for implementation. The target population is low income co-parenting couples with children age seven and younger. Families are randomly assigned into one of three groups: 1) a one-time educational presentation about how positive father involvement improves outcomes for children; 2) a 16-week (2 hours per week) group meeting for fathers and, 3) a 16-week group for couples (2 hours per week). All project participants receive case management services. Data is collected through a battery of assessments that is administered three times during each family's participation in the study. It is anticipated that a final report of SFI results will be prepared in 2009.

CAPIT and CAPTA funds are being utilized to fund the intervention.

### **Significant Accomplishments**

A fifth site, located in Contra Costa County, was added to provide services primarily to African American families. This site has made remarkable progress in its first year of operation.

As of May 2008, the five sites have determined 1,084 families as eligible for this study. Project meetings, to provide face-to-face training and technical assistance to staff of the five sites, were held in May and October of 2007 and January of 2008.

The design of the SFI study for low-income families involves random assignment of participants to one of the following: (1) a single-session information presentation (the control group), (2) a 16-week fathers-only group, or (3) a 16-week couple's group. Clinically trained group leaders, male-female staff pairs, conduct interventions with all study participants. As of May 2008, 1,084 families have been found eligible for services. Analyses of changes in the full sample assessed at baseline and again three months after the intervention showed that a single meeting focused on father involvement (the control condition) produced, on the average no significant positive changes, and allowed some significant negative changes to occur in the fathers and mothers who participated. By contrast, the father's groups and the couple's groups produced a number of positive effects on the participants as individuals, on their couple relationship, and on their relationships with their children. Participants in the ongoing groups reported fewer symptoms of anxiety and depression at the post-test assessment than they had before the intervention began. They maintained their satisfaction with their relationships as couples, in contrast with control couples whose couple relationship satisfaction declined. Fathers in both the father's groups and couple's groups showed significant increases in their hands-on involvement in the daily tasks of child care. Finally, participants in both ongoing interventions experienced a significant rise in annual income, in

comparison with control participants whose incomes remained stable. In some areas of functioning, the couple's group participants showed greater gains than the father's group participants (larger declines in parenting stress and larger increases in father involvement).

The results, especially for the groups in which both mothers and fathers participate regularly, appear promising - in terms of fostering increased father involvement in their young children's care and parents' satisfaction with their relationships as couples, and the parents' ratings of their young children's aggressive behavior.

### **Barriers/Unexpected Events**

In March 2007, CDSS and Contra Costa County reached an agreement that allowed the county to participate in the study through the North Richmond Family Service Center. This Contra Costa County SFI site predominantly serves African American families. The first year (March 07-March 08) proved to be very challenging as the staff faced many barriers: three different Project Directors, vandalism of their office building necessitated renovation, being relocated to the county child welfare building situated in an industrial area several miles from the original site where families reside, and after the completion of renovation moving back to the original site, which is located in an area rife with gang violence. During these challenges, the staff consistently provided service to the families. Their first two groups began during the middle of March 2008.

### **Future Plans**

By the end of FFY 2007/08, the site group leaders and Strategies, a program funded by CDSS/OCAP to provide training and technical assistance to family resource centers and family support programs, will have developed the first training of trainers guide to be used in teaching new agencies how to run fathers and couples groups.

During FFY 2008/09, the Strategies SFI dissemination trainers completed a two day training of trainers workshop designed to prepare them to disseminate SFI results to varied agencies throughout the state. As a part of this effort, Strategies is moving forward to develop an extensive statewide dissemination plan initiated with two one-day presentations in Southern California before July 2008. The SFI researchers and staff are working closely with Strategies on the presentation contents. Strategies will also work with the Fenton Communication Group regarding Fenton's development of a media campaign to disseminate SFI information to the general public within California. Additionally, the four original sites will host their county specific activities and mentor at least three agencies, within their respective counties, in implementing the SFI program. The fifth site, in Contra Costa County, will move forward with recruiting families for their phase I of the Study.

CDSS/OCAP is moving forward with intentions to provide additional funding to the original sites for FFYs 2008/11 to service families with more complicated issues, such as drug abuse, domestic violence, etc.



## **Differential Response (DR)**

The development work for the pilots started in July 2003, and in June 2006, all 11 counties implemented the pilots in accordance with their plans. These improvements, which impact both system and practice, are the keys to the ongoing effort to improve statewide program outcomes and continually improve outcomes for children and families including the prevention of child fatalities. The Results Group completed an evaluation on the effectiveness of these pilots on February 8, 2008.

The final report entitled "*Planning for Success: An Analysis of California Counties' Child Welfare System Improvement Plans*" prepared by the Child and Family Policy Institute of California under contract with CDSS was published in the summer of 2007. This report evaluated the first full year implementation of county system improvement plans under AB 636. This evaluation shows California's Child Welfare Services outcomes and accountability system is already providing the structures and guidance necessary to ensure that counties and communities work together to improve outcomes for abused and neglected children and their families. In reviewing the work the counties have laid the foundation for the next phase of the quality improvement cycle. Data associating strategies with outcomes are now available on a county-by-county basis, providing counties with a critically important self-assessment tool as well as offering them opportunities to draw on similarly situated counties for peer learning and support.

While it is still early in the process, the new accountability system is resulting in very real changes in the way child welfare agencies "do business" across the state:

- Data outcome measures are focusing discussions toward common goals.
- Child welfare staff and other agencies are sharing information and knowledge to improve outcomes for children.
- Counties are involving communities throughout the state in an open problem-solving process on behalf of children and families.

## **All County Information Notices (ACIN)**

### **Policy Guidance and Information Provided to Counties**

#### [ACIN I-03-07 \(January 25, 2007\)](#)

Implementation of Differential Response Special Project Codes in the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System.

#### [ACIN I-08-07 \(April 2, 2007\)](#)

Publication 129: Child Abuse & You.

#### [ACIN I-15-07 \(April 3, 2007\)](#)

Kids' Day At The Capitol.

#### [ACIN I-15-07E \(April 5, 2007\)](#)

Kids' Day At The Capitol.

[ACIN I-28-07 \(July 17, 2007\)](#)

Requirements of the Code of Federal Regulations on Accreditation of Adoption Agencies for Intercountry Adoptions (22 CFR Part 96, Subpart F).

[ACIN I-34-07 \(July 3, 2007\)](#)

Recording Social Worker Contacts in the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System.

[ACIN I-35-07 \(July 11, 2007\)](#)

Resource Family Recruitment, Training and Retention Annual Report, State Fiscal Year 2005/2006.

[ACIN I-46-07 \(November 5, 2007\)](#)

California's Outcomes and Accountability System Triennial Schedule.

[ACIN I-52-07 \(October 2, 2007\)](#)

Resource Family Recruitment Training and Retention Survey State Fiscal Year 2006/2007.

[ACIN I-61-07 \(October 26, 2007\)](#)

Online Change Reports for Group Home Rate Information.

[ACIN I-65-07 \(October 26, 2007\)](#)

Kinship/Foster Care Emergency Fund

[ACIN I-69-07 \(November 16, 2007\)](#)

Child and Family Services Review Parent and Foster Parent Survey

[ACIN I-02-08 \(January 22, 2008\)](#)

Documentation of Interpretive Services at Every Point of Contact.

[ACIN I-06-08 \(February 7, 2008\)](#)

Request for Letter of Intent From Counties to Participate in California's Group Home Reform Effort.

[ACIN I-12-08 \(February 25, 2008\)](#)

Implementation of New Readoption Provisions For Intercountry Adoptions - Senate Bill 1393 (Chapter 809, Statutes of 2006).

### **All County Letters (ACL)**

[ACL 07-09 \(February 6, 2007\)](#)

Implementation of Assembly Bill 1633.

[ACL 07-09E \(September 11, 2007\)](#)

Correction to All County Letter 07-09 (Implementation of Assembly Bill 1633).

[ACL 07-14 \(April 27, 2007\)](#)

Changes to Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance Program (AAP) Activities That

are Eligible for Federal Financial Participation (FFP) as the Result of the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) of 2005.

[ACL 07-14E \(October 4, 2007\)](#)

Correction to All County Letter (ACL) No. 07-14 Changes to Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance Program (AAP) Activities That Are Eligible for Federal Financial Participation (FFP) as the Result of the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) of 2005.

[ACL 07-17 \(August 13, 2007\)](#)

Assembly Bill 2488; Adoption: Sibling Mutual Consent Program - Confidential Intermediary.

[ACL 07-20 \(May 15, 2007\)](#)

Reminder of Documentation Requirements to Verify Citizenship or Immigration Status of Foster Children.

[ACL 07-20E \(August 22, 2007\)](#)

Correction to All County Letter 07-20 (Reminder of Documentation Requirements to Verify Citizenship or Immigration Status of Foster Children).

[ACL 07-27 \(October 30, 2007\)](#) Child Welfare Services Criminal Record Checks Assembly Bill (AB) 1774 Chapter 726, Statutes of 2006.

[ACL 07-28 \(October 25, 2007\)](#)

Senate Bill (SB) 1641 Chapter 388, Statutes of 2006.

[ACL 07-33 \(September 21, 2007\)](#)

Foster Youth Proof of Wardship Documentation.

[ACL 07-33E \(November 21, 2007\)](#)

Correction to All County Letter No. 07-33 - Foster Youth Proof of Wardship Documentation.

[ACL 07-36 \(October 15, 2007\)](#)

Sharing Ratios for Group Home Programs.

[ACL 07-37 \(October 22, 2007\)](#)

Release of Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) Search Response.

[ACL 07-39 \(October 25, 2007\)](#)

Temporary Placement of Foster Child with Relative or Nonrelative Extended Family Member (NREFM) in an Emergency Situation.

[ACL 07-43 \(October 22, 2007\)](#)

Independent Living Program (ILP) Annual Statistical Report [SOC 405A (10/070)].

[ACL 07-47 \(November 21, 2007\)](#)

Impact of Senate Bill (SB) 84 (Chapter 177, Statutes of 2007) on the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment (KinGAP) Program Implementation.

[ACL 07-48 \(November 20, 2007\)](#)

Clarifying Guidance Regarding Candidates for Foster Care.

[ACL 07-49 \(December 19, 2007\)](#)

New Federal Policy Guidelines Relating to the Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care Program.

[ACL 07-52 \(December 21, 2007\)](#)

The Use of Substantial Risk as an Allegation.

[ACL 07-53 \(December 28, 2007\)](#)

Gomez v. Saenz Lawsuit Settlement.

ACL 07-54 (December 27, 2007) Federal Requirement to Contact Other States' Child Abuse And Neglect Registries for Relative and Non-Relative Extended Family Member Home Approvals.

[ACL 07-55 \(December 27, 2007\)](#)

2006 Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Review Results and Findings.

[ACL 08-01 \(January 17, 2008\)](#)

Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care, Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment Program and Adoption Assistance Program Rates.

[ACL 08-02 \(January 28, 2008\)](#)

Senate Bill (SB) 678, Chapter 838, Statutes Of 2006 Indian Child Welfare Changes In State Law.

[ACL 08-04 \(January 15, 2008\)](#)

New Regulations for Trustline Registry and Requirements for License-Exempt Child Care Providers.

[ACL 08-05 \(February 6, 2008\)](#)

Independent Living Program Annual Narrative Report and Plan for Federal Fiscal Year 2007

ACL 08-26 (May 28, 2008)

Federal and State Changes to Requirements for Interstate Placement of Children and Caregivers Rights.

### **County Fiscal Letters (CFL)**

[CFL 07/08-31 \(December 13, 2007\)](#)

Federal Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) of 2005, Signed February 8, 2006, and Revised Policy and Instructions for Title IV-E/Non-Title IV-E Discount Rate

## **Promoting Safe and Stable Families**

## **THE PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES PROGRAM**

California continues to use the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) grant to operate and expand on a PSSF program that incorporates services covering the federally identified categories of Family Preservation, Community-Based Family Support, Time-Limited Family Reunification and Adoption Promotion and Support.

To verify that the CDSS has met the non-supplantation requirements for Title IV-B subpart 2 programs in Section 432(a)(7)(A) of the Social Security Act, we have compared the state and local funds spent in the State Family Preservation programs for FFY 1992 and FFY 2006. The State Family Preservation program is the state level program that relates directly to the Title IV-B subpart 2 programs. In FFY 1992, CDSS spent \$13,138,422 in state and local funds for this program compared to \$42,168,196 spent in PSSF for FFY 2006.

### **Selection Process for County PSSF Programs**

California allocates approximately 85% of its PSSF grant directly to counties for the community provision of direct services and sets aside 15% of the total PSSF grant for state operated programs and administrative costs (no more than 10% of the total grant). The state does not take any administrative costs out of the matching state Family Preservation Fund. The total amount is allocated to counties to use for service.

Each county selects programs for funding in accordance with its own needs assessment, and conducts procurement activities in accordance with local administrative requirements. This occurs at least every three years, as counties are required to develop and submit PSSF plans to the CDSS for review and approval on three-year cycles, including annual PSSF updates. The CDSS provides technical assistance to the counties, addressing the need for consistency and coordination among the C-CFSR, the county's SIP and the county's three-year PSSF plan. The CDSS reviews the three-year plans addressing the need for such consistency and coordination, prior to approving a county plan and authorizing its PSSF allocations.

### **Three-Year Plans**

California has required counties to develop plans for use of the PSSF funds on a three-year cycle with annual updates based on federal fiscal year with the current cycle ending September 30, 2008. Accordingly, on May 23, 2005, the CDSS disseminated All-County Information Notice 1-25-05, for the current three-year cycle of October 1, 2005 through September 30, 2008, outlining Three-Year Plan instructions. To best address the findings of the federal CFSR, the state's PIP, the county SIP, the CWS System Improvement activities and the new Outcomes and Accountability System (AB 636), California required counties to combine their PSSF plans with their Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (CAPIT)/Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention plans. The cycle began on July 1, 2005, and extends through June 30, 2008. The resulting consolidated plan provides a more complete picture of the continuum of needs and services within each county and facilitates blending and maximizing of funds.

CDSS is currently developing guidelines for the integration of the County System Improvement Plan that is part of the Outcomes and Accountability System and the

PSSF/CAPIT/CBCAP three year plan. Because the Outcomes and Accountability System is on a triennial cycle with each county having different due dates for their County SIP, an interim plan was developed. CDSS released an instructional letter that provided the transitional plan that allows counties to submit their three year integrated SIP/PSSF/CAPIT/CBCAP Plan that will be due within the next three years due post July 1, 2009.

The CDSS' OCAP has the oversight responsibility for the PSSF Program. As such, OCAP provides technical assistance to the counties. The technical assistance provided by OCAP stresses the need for consistency and coordination between the C-CFSR, CWS System Improvements and the consolidated three year plan and annual updates.

### **Needs Assessments and Types of PSSF Services**

Preventive services are determined by each county based on their own community needs assessment. Such assessments have identified a greater need for family preservation and support services in rural areas where isolation is a challenge to families needing preventive services. The needs assessments also show that the size of the population in these areas does not support a wide variety of adoption services.

On the other hand, these assessments show a greater parity among categories of services in the urban areas where a larger population base increases the need for, and provision of family reunification, adoption and adoption support services.

As previously stated, it is the intent of CDSS to continue to have local community services funded by PSSF funds to follow PSSF program criteria in each of the four federal categories. PSSF criteria states that at minimum 20% of the service funds must be spent in each of the four federally identified categories: Family Preservation, Family Support, Time-Limited Family Reunification, and Adoption Promotion and Support services. Current examples of PSSF services provided by counties this year include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Family Preservation**  
Programs such as in-home services for at-risk children and their families; programs providing follow-up care to families where a child has been returned after a foster care placement, including integrated case management, intensive home visiting and strength-based parenting services designed to improve parenting skills by reinforcing parents' confidence in their strengths.
- **Family Support**  
Health screenings and physical examinations including kindergarten health check-ups, nutrition education classes, family assessment and referral services, strength-based parenting and parent leadership services, individual and group counseling, mentoring, gang intervention, and other services designed to enhance student success and youth enrichment programs.
- **Time-Limited Family Reunification**  
Individual, family and group counseling; inpatient residential and outpatient substance abuse treatment; mental health; domestic violence; temporary child care; therapeutic

services for families, including crisis nurseries; transportation to and/or from services; family assessment and referral services; case plan development; supervised and guided visitation services; father involvement services; in-home support; crisis intervention for children at risk of removal (emphasizing reunification when in the best interest of the children) and aftercare services to reunifying families.

NOTE: Unless specifically tailored for reunifying families (e.g., aftercare, case plan development and supervised visitation specific to targeted reunifying families), these services are also available under the other three categories.

- **Adoption Promotion and Support Services**

Services include, but are not limited to, adoptive parent recruitment, including public service announcements; orientations for pre-adoptive families to prepare them for adoptive home studies, parenting skills and training programs for adoptive parents.

The attached CFS-101, PART II: Annual Summary of Child and Family Services chart includes specific data on the estimated number of individuals and/or families to be served and the estimated expenditures by fund source for the services.

Activities funded by these funds are described throughout the APSR and include child protective services, assessing a family's needs, referrals to appropriate resources, home visiting programs, etc. for families where the children remain in the home. In addition, for those children who are removed from the home, counseling services as needed, outpatient substance abuse treatment for parents, transportation to services, etc. are provided.

Among other services, for those instances when a child will not return home, adoption home studies are conducted and pre-adoptive families are recruited and trained.

Activities for this federal fiscal year and next will be focused on those strategies contained in California's Program Improvement Plan.

### **Identified Gaps in PSSF Services**

Although gaps in PSSF services have been identified through county-submitted PSSF updates, the C-CFSR process, and the CDSS' consultation process, current information shows strong county efforts to close the gaps.

However, due to the decrease in PSSF funding, it has become more challenging for state and local service providers to provide rural services consistently and effectively as funds determine how many services are available. CDSS continues to explore new ways of addressing these gaps and have incorporated tribal representation into local planning. Some of the gaps are being addressed through the work being done at the state level through the SIT.

Types of gaps existing in rural areas include: lack of readily accessible transportation to-and-from services and limited availability of appropriate foster family homes making it more difficult to access and provide time-limited family reunification services. Having



geographically rural populations to serve makes adoptive parent recruitment and provision of post-adoption services more challenging.

The CDSS county contacts also revealed gaps in culturally-appropriate services specifically for Native Americans. The OCAP staff noted the following additional service gaps in their review of county self assessments and SIPs, which affect the four PSSF categories:

- Supervised visitation resources for children.
- Substance abuse treatment facilities for parents with young children.
- Post-adoption services.
- Respite care.
- Affordable housing.

### **Twenty percent minimum of PSSF funds are to be spent in each of the identified categories**

Although counties make their local categorical decisions based on local needs, the OCAP continues to instruct them on the 20% categorical spending requirement through an annual PSSF update instruction letter disseminated to counties. The annual letter requires that a strong rationale must be provided for each decision where a county is not meeting the specified 20% minimum. In addition, OCAP monitors county expenditure data, and provides technical assistance and administrative assistance necessary to correct any issues.

The OCAP monitors county expenditures quarterly to determine if additional technical assistance or development of a corrective action plan (CAP) is necessary for a county not meeting its goals as identified in the county three year plan and/or subsequent PSSF annual updates.

Each situation where there is a deficiency will be examined as to the reasonableness of meeting the goals on a county-specific basis. If there are reasons for not meeting each one of the goals, the specific county goals and the associated justifications will be documented. To ensure that the 20% goals are met on a statewide basis, the OCAP considers the information reported by each county when assessing the state's overall achievement.

There are some difficulties with reporting expenditures on a FFY basis, as the state allocates funds to the counties on a state fiscal year basis of July 1 to June 30. This means that when the state reports its expenditures, because of the nature of the state's budgeting and accounting system, it would include funding from two separate federal grants as well as funding from special projects, partially funded by the 15% set aside. Notwithstanding this, for FFY 2006, the state expended funds in the following proportions:

- Family Preservation: 27.42%.
- Family Support: 33.34%.
- Time-Limited Family Reunification: 21.84%.
- Adoption Promotion and Support Services: 17.39%.

In reviewing the SFY 2006/07 expenditures, we are pleased to report a very strong program compliance showing due to both state and county efforts. These efforts included individual

OCAP attention to specific counties that had been identified as not meeting the percentages and working with the CWDA to ensure that both county fiscal personnel, as well as county program personnel, were aware of the 20% requirement along with CDSS's continuing to monitor expenditures. In addition, counties are reminded through annual instructions included with their allocation letter as to the 20% categorical spending requirements.

Internally, OCAP staff is now regularly in communication with CDSS fiscal staff in order to monitor expenditures on a quarterly, county-by-county basis. As the quarterly expenditure reports are issued, OCAP follows-up with the counties that appear to be having difficulty meeting the minimum percentages.

Current fiscal data clearly indicates that counties have made tremendous progress toward achieving the required 20% minimum in each category.

Finally, counties are now more closely scrutinizing their claiming process to assure that they are claiming to the proper PSSF category, thus better reflecting their actual compliance with the PSSF 20% requirements. In prior years, this failure of accurate claiming had been a considerable problem, especially with Los Angeles County.

Through continued work with both county program and county fiscal staff as well as our own fiscal staff, the state is near to meeting the 20% minimum spending requirements.

### **The Impact of Los Angeles County on California's Percentage Deficiency**

A significant issue with respect to the state's inability to achieve the 20% spending requirement had been the PSSF expenditure patterns of Los Angeles County. The county in past years had not claimed PSSF funds for its Time Limited Family Reunification or for Adoption Promotion and Support services. This is highly significant for the state, as Los Angeles County receives the largest PSSF county allocation.

In response to our concerns, Los Angeles County submitted a corrective action plan (CAP) to the OCAP. The CDSS and Los Angeles County representatives engaged in constant communication regarding their progress on the CAP. The Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) started to demonstrate progress in all areas of their CAP.

SFY 2006/07 fiscal information shows that Los Angeles County has now achieved the 20% minimum spending requirement in each of the four PSSF categories and is in compliance as follows:

- Family Preservation: 25.81%.
- Family Support: 26.82%.
- Adoption Promotion and Support: 25.37%.
- Time-Limited Family Reunification: 21.99%.

The CDSS will continue to support Los Angeles County with focused technical assistance regarding claiming and coordination of services to ensure continued PSSF compliance.

The OCAP staff provided technical assistance through in-person visits and via e-mail and phone contact to counties that were not demonstrating a minimum of 20% expenditure in each category. Current survey data and fiscal information show the counties have in total moved toward full category compliance.

Most counties have made marked improvement on meeting the 20% requirements in the four PSSF categories. Based on this over-all county improvement along with Los Angeles County vastly improving to the point of meeting 20% compliance, the state is now quite close to achieving 20% compliance for each category of service as it has met the 20% compliance in three of the four categories. The CDSS expects full compliance to be achieved by next reporting period.

### **PSSF Linkages to Other Family Support and Family Preservation Services**

The OCAP will continue working with counties to identify linkages with existing family support and family preservation services. The OCAP requires counties in their PSSF reports to submit information on linkages with other programs. Of particular interest to the OCAP is information that identifies county PSSF efforts linked to the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) cash assistance program, parenting training, and other programs such as substance abuse, child abuse prevention, early intervention services, mental health, local correctional facilities and work force development.

### **Blending of Funds**

The OCAP encourages counties to maximize services through linking to other fund sources. As a rule, counties blend funds from available sources that include the following programs: PSSF, CAPTA, CBCAP, the CAPIT Program, the Children's Trust Fund, funds from tobacco tax, city and county funds, foundations and private donations. The intent is to maximize services by providing a continuum of services for children and families from all serving agencies.

## **DIFFERENTIAL RESPONSE**

### **The PSSF Funds will be Used to Develop and Expand Family Support and Family Preservation Services**

Differential Response (DR) is an intake system which allows the child welfare agency to respond in an individualized manner to referrals based on the unique needs, resources and circumstances of the family. It is designed to engage the participation of vulnerable families and children currently not receiving services. For more information, please refer to the Safety Section of this report.

The PSSF funds will continue to be used to broaden the network of services that counties have available to serve families without having to open a case in the CWS system. These services are essential for the early intervention intake system within a DR framework. They will allow CWS to respond earlier, with greater flexibility, and with customized services and support for families ensuring child safety and reducing or eliminating re-entry into the CWS system.

Counties are using a variety of funding sources to fund the implementation and expansion of DR, including PSSF, grant funds, etc., and future expansion is dependent on the availability of funds.

### **Expanded Family Support and Family Preservation Services Connect To Existing Preventive Services**

Some communities have gaps in services so that families are not able to obtain the appropriate services when they need them. As a result, circumstances in the family often deteriorate to the point that CWS must become involved, and perhaps, remove children from their homes. By expanding on these services in a carefully planned manner so that they are integrated with existing services, a complete spectrum of core services may become available.

DR redefines the relationship between the child welfare agency and existing and new community providers as partners in protecting children. The goal is that PSSF funds will be used to build this network of services through the partnership between CWS and community providers. The overall goal of DR is to provide support and preservation services to families before they become formally involved with the CWS agency. This process involves an active partnership with community based organizations, as well as other county service agencies.

Funding for future years is heavily dependent on the amount of state General Fund monies available for the CWS System improvement activities. Although PSSF funding is utilized, the amount of federal funds received are insufficient to sustain these improvements.

### **Differential Response Linkages to Other Services and the Child and Family Services**

Within California, the DR strategy creates a new early intervention intake system in which the child welfare agency responds in a more flexible manner (with three response paths rather than one) to referrals of child abuse or neglect based on the perceived safety and risk factors present in the family. Services are provided based on the family's needs, resources and circumstances.

Path One assumes there will be no further involvement of CWS in the case unless the circumstances prove to be different than what was known at intake. These cases would be typically low or no-risk of child abuse and neglect, but it is clear the family is experiencing problems or stressors which could be addressed by community services. Through this path, community agencies expand CWS ability to have someone respond, see the child is safe, preserve the family and provide support/services to families.

Path Two is for families that present with moderate risks of child abuse and neglect. Safety factors may not be immediately manifested in all cases, but risk is present. CWS will conduct an in-person contact (this contact may include a community partner). Services may be provided through CWS and/or partnership with community organizations to ensure that families are receiving services and support based upon their needs.

Path Three is for families that present with higher risk and/or safety concerns. These cases require a more immediate response to ensure child safety. CWS and law enforcement (where necessary) will be the key responders for this path. Through the support of county interagency partners and community service providers, services and support will be enhanced to ensure child safety within the home or in out-of-home care.

### **Child Abuse and Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Funds Integration and Coordination with Child and Family Services**

The CAPTA funds are used to strengthen child abuse prevention services and support various demonstration projects that implement best practices for integration with the local child and family services continuum. The emphasis is on child abuse prevention services, including family preservation and support. For example, CAPTA funds are used to provide training and technical assistance that focus on FRCs and the wide variety of child and family services they provide; the development and support of Citizen Review Panels (CRPs) in selected counties; to provide stipends to parents and foster parents to attend statewide CRP meetings; and the development and implementation of the SFI Study as a promising practice.

In SFY 2003/04, the SFI Study began testing a particular family-based intervention that is designed to enhance the positive involvement of fathers with their children and to enhance the organizational culture of FRCs to be more inclusive of fathers. In addition to the outcomes of the intervention, it is anticipated that the study will increase parent engagement into FRC services due to increased outreach and training and technical assistance for staff on skills related to community engagement, retention of families and expertise in referral strategies. The study has been extended through June 2009 in order to test the intervention with new populations and to disseminate research findings. It is anticipated that a final report of SFI results will be prepared in 2009.

### **Small County Initiative II (SCI II)**

SCI II focused on the unique needs of small counties (defined as those with populations of 70,000 or less) in strengthening their existing county prevention infrastructure and capacity to deliver services to small rural communities. The initiative provided additional funding and resources to these small counties' redesign activities.

Eleven counties participated in the initiative through a competitive process. These counties included: Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Del Norte, Glenn, Plumas, Siskiyou, Tehama, Trinity, Tuolumne and Yuba. Initially the implementation period for SCI II covered January 1, 2004 through December 31, 2006. Program funding source was a combination of PSSF and CBCAP. Additional PSSF funds were provided to complete the full SFY ending June 30, 2007.

The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) evaluated SCI II and noted that overall these selected counties made progress with their preventive infrastructure and their capacity to deliver services to rural communities. In addition, preventive data received by CDSS from these counties is now much more in line with Redesign efforts. The lesson learned from this initiative is that SCI II did achieve its goal of aligning these small counties to the total state

effort of redesigning and improving CWS prevention effort throughout the state, including small rural counties.

## **Title IV-B, Part 1 Funds**

The funds for Title IV-B, Part 1 were used last year by counties to fund their basic child protective services programs. These include providing pre-placement prevention activities as well as in-home family maintenance services to families, to prevent abuse and neglect and to reduce out-of-home care placements. Services provided to families and children include transportation, counseling, emergency in-home caretakers, substance abuse treatment, parenting education, domestic violence intervention, etc.

In addition, the funds were also used for the family reunification program, which provides support services to families and children who have been removed from the home to make the family environment safe for the child to return. A reunification plan is created and services made available to the parents that can include parent training, homemaking skills, substance abuse treatment, counseling, etc. Funds were also used for the permanent placement program, which is designed to help children who can't return to their birth family find a safe, stable, permanent home. This includes arranging for adoption or guardianship, preferably in the home of a relative. If for some reason these options are not available, a youth may remain in out-of-home care with annual permanency reviews until he/she leaves the child welfare system at age 18 under an emancipation plan. Funds for Title IV-B, Part 1 will continue to be utilized by counties to fund the same programs for the upcoming federal fiscal year.



## **Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project**

## **Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Project Update**

On March 31, 2006, the U.S. DHHS approved California's Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project (Title IV-E waiver). The five-year demonstration project allows counties flexibility to use federal and state foster care maintenance and administrative funds that were previously restricted to pay for board and care costs and child welfare administration to provide direct services and supports.

The intent of the Title IV-E waiver is to test a capped allocation strategy of federal Title IV-E and SGF assistance and administrative costs; and will support improved safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children and families. The specific goals of the Title IV-E waiver are:

- To improve the array of services for children and families and engage families through a more individualized approach that emphasizes family involvement;
- To increase child safety without an over-reliance on out-of-home care;
- To improve permanency outcomes and timelines; and
- To improve child and family well-being.

This flexible funding waiver demonstration will support practice, program, and system improvements for early intervention, reunification efforts, and reduction in out-of-home placements. Foster care savings that occur as a result of the Title IV-E waiver will be reinvested by the counties in CWS program improvements. The Title IV-E waiver will target Title IV-E eligible and non-IV-E eligible children ages zero through 19 currently in out-of-home placement, or who are at-risk of entering or re-entering foster care. Alameda County and Los Angeles County are participating in the Title IV-E waiver. The two participating counties have nearly 25,000 children and youth in foster care and represents approximately 37% of the caseload in California. Implementation of the project began on July 1, 2007.

In addition, the CDSS is required to conduct an independent, third party evaluation consisting of a process evaluation, outcome evaluation, and a cost analysis. The evaluation contractor is the San Jose State University Research Foundation and Dr. Charlie Ferguson is the principal investigator for the project.

To implement the Title IV-E waiver, Alameda County will utilize the flexibility for a series of proactive reinvestment strategies to better direct resources to prevention, early intervention, and long-term family-based supports. The outcome of reinvestment efforts is to serve youth and their caretakers with localized, familial, and neighborhood-based supports. During the initial phase, Alameda County will fund the following six strategies based on outcome improvement and cost effectiveness:

- One Child, One Placement - Child Welfare Workers Relative Approvals and Placement.
- Enhanced Family Finding.
- Expanded Reunification Team Decision Meetings.
- Expanded CalWORKS – Child Welfare Services Linkages Pilot Project.
- Implemented Permanency Concurrent Planning Team Decision Meetings.
- Expanded the Alternative Road to Safety Program countywide and target population to serve ages zero through 18.

Under the Title IV-E waiver, Los Angeles County has targeted improved community partnerships, improved service delivery, and creating new accountability structures. The county will use the flexibility to make strategic investments in reforms to better serve children and families and improve outcomes. These reforms build on significant systems improvements already underway among county departments and community partners. The county has identified universal and specific needs and requirements for dependent and delinquent foster care populations. The Child Welfare and Probation Departments will operate under a sequenced implementation of service delivery enhancement that is based on feasibility and speed of implementation, target population, and extent of estimated impact.

During the initial phase, Los Angeles County prioritized three strategies to implement:

- Expansion of Family Team Decision Making Conferences.
- Focused Family Finding and engagement through pilot specialized permanency units at three regional offices.
- Up-front assessments on high-risk cases for domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental health issues.

Los Angeles County Probation has identified the following four priorities:

- Enhanced cross-systems care assessment and case planning.
- Expansion of Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) and Functional Family Therapy (FFT).
- Restructuring of placement services.
- Utilization of aftercare support services.

## **Indian Child Welfare Act**

## **INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT (ICWA)**

The CDSS continues to work with the self identified representatives of 106 federally recognized California tribes, as well as the approximately 50 tribes that are not currently recognized. The activities/projects discussed below describe the measures that the CDSS continues to take to ensure compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).

### **Specific Accomplishments/Progress**

All County Letter (ACL) No. 08-02 provided information and resources on SB 678 (Chapter 838, Statutes of 2006). This legislation is a comprehensive bill that focuses on child custody proceedings for Indian children. The goal of SB 678 is the uniform application of the federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) in California. The underlying purpose of the ICWA is to protect the best interest of Indian children, including having tribal membership and connection to their tribal community, and to promote the stability and security of Indian tribes and their families.

### **Child and Family Services Division ICWA Workgroup**

The ICWA Workgroup was formed in July 2002. It continues to expand its membership and now consists of over 69 tribal ICWA workers/advocates, 30 county child welfare and probation representatives, 17 CDSS staff, and 6 state/university representatives. The CDSS utilizes the ICWA Workgroup as a means of consulting with tribes. The tribal members of the Workgroup were chosen by the California tribes as their representatives to the CDSS. The Workgroup meets bimonthly to discuss ICWA issues and make recommendations on how to ensure implementation of the Act. Consultation also occurs via e-mail.

The ICWA Workgroup continues to meet bi-monthly to identify ICWA issues/problems that exist and develop recommendations and solutions for tribes, counties and the state. The agenda for ICWA workgroup meetings is set in accordance to issues and topics emerge from discussions in the workgroup or in discussions as CDSS staff consults with tribal and county representatives through-out the state. Significant topics of discussion this year included the implementation of SB 678, tribally approved homes, traditional/customary adoptions, expert witnesses, ICWA training, data regarding Indian children in the California child welfare system, etc. As a result the following are some of the key accomplishments of the Workgroup this year are (details follow):

- Developed a sub-group to consider the issue of Permanency for children and youth.

State policies regarding permanency/adoption are largely in conflict with tribal customs. The purpose of the Permanency for Children and Youth Sub-workgroup which was established by CDSS in the spring of 2008, is to develop a permanency model for Indian children and youth in California that incorporates traditional cultural values and customs and meets Title IV-E requirements. As a result of tribal interest in recognition of 'customary adoption' in California, the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians sponsored AB 2736, which was carried by Assemblyman Paul Cook, in February of 2008. At the time of the submittal of this report this bill is still moving through the legislature. [As of August 25,

2008, the bill was sent to the inactive file. It is expected that it will be re-introduced by the sponsors.]

- Developed a sub-group to consider the issue of tribally approved foster homes.

California tribes report that counties are not recognizing “tribally approved homes” in making decisions regarding the placement of Indian children. The purpose of the Tribally Approved Foster Homes Sub-workgroup is to review existing placement and Title IV-E policies to 1) identify what guidance has been provided that influences county practice, 2) what barriers exist, if any to the utilization of tribally approved homes, and 3) to determine if policy change is necessary to facilitate the understanding of ICWA and Title IV-E provisions regarding the utilization of tribally approved homes. As a result of the Sub-workgroup’s recommendations, CDSS has developed an ACIN that will be released in the fall of 2008.

- Continued work with the Judicial Council of California in the continuation of the ICWA Initiative Project.

Refer to that Section entitled “Other Efforts” beginning on page 31 for details.

### **Tribal/State Agreements**

The CDSS is continuing to facilitate the consideration of tribal/state agreements which will allow for the pass-through of Title IV-E funds to tribes. These funds will provide tribes with foster care funding for Indian children.

On March 14, 2007, the CDSS and the Karuk Tribe of California signed the first ever tribal/state agreement in California. State staff is continuing to provide training and technical assistance to staff of the Karuk Tribe to prepare them for the implementation of the agreement. CDSS and the Karuk Tribe secured technical assistance through Region IX and the National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement (NRCOI) to provide assistance to the Karuk tribe in the development of the tribe’s Child Welfare Services Plan. CDSS is still reviewing and processing the Tribe’s CWS Plan and will be submitting it to Region IX for approval in early summer 2008.

While there has been a hiatus in the negotiations of a Tribal/State agreement with the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, recent communications with the Washoe Tribe indicate a renewed interest in pursuing an agreement. The most recent version of the agreement has been presented to the Tribe for their review, and the CDSS is still awaiting a formal response as they recently indicated a renewed interest.

With the signing of the Karuk agreement, CDSS has experienced an increased interest from other tribes in pursuing such agreements. CDSS has developed a standardized presentation it utilizes to inform interested tribes regarding the benefits and costs of Title IV-E agreements. CDSS has conducted orientation meetings with the Yurok Tribe, Hopland band of Pomo Indians, the lone Band of Miwok Indians and the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians. In addition, there are others interested including the Morongo Band of Mission Indians, the Dry Creek Rancheria, and the Tule River Rancheria.

## **ICWA Training Projects/Conferences**

### **Annual ICWA Conference**

The CDSS continues to support the annual statewide ICWA conference hosted by a volunteer tribe or group of tribes. This is an activity the ICWA Workgroup continues to see as a priority to promote improved ICWA compliance. The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Statewide ICWA Conference was held June 2008 in Visalia, California. It was hosted by Big Sandy Rancheria, located in the Central Valley in Auberry, California. The mission of the conference is to promote positive partnerships and collaboration between tribes and federal, state and local governments for the benefit of all Indian children. The conference included a presentation on collaboration by Terry Cross, Executive Director of the National Indian Child Welfare Association; various workshops regarding ICWA, SB 678 – California ICWA requirements, the Native American Rights Fund's Guide to ICWA, using expert witnesses in ICWA cases, traditional/customary Tribal adoptions, etc. The CDSS provides \$25,000 from the State General Fund to partially support the Annual Statewide ICWA Conference.

See information under Indian Child Welfare Initiative for additional training activities this year.

### **Indian Child Welfare Act Initiative**

Effective December 2005, the CDSS entered into an interagency agreement with the Judicial Council of California to create the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Initiative. The Initiative is effective from 2007 through 2010. This initiative is now 100% funded out of state General Fund dollars. The initiative was created because Indian children continue to be removed from their families and tribal communities and placed with non-Indian caregivers. While juvenile court judges and placing agency staff have received some training on ICWA, this initiative presents an opportunity to provide targeted training and technical assistance in order to increase knowledge of ICWA by making available a range of facilitation and training services through cross-disciplinary regional and locally targeted trainings for judicial officers, clerks, attorneys, social workers and probation officers. Services are tailored to the needs of the local court system or region. As part of this initiative, educational materials addressing the federal requirements under the Indian Child Welfare Act have been developed. These materials include charts, agency checklists on notice procedures and case planning, a judicial handbook, descriptions of available services to Indian children and families, and a qualified ICWA expert witness list.

In light of SB 678, the Judicial Council worked with the Administrative Office of the Court's CJER Division to update the handbook with citations to the new statutory provisions. The Revised Handbook is available to judicial officers online in Serranus and posted on their website. The Judicial Council has focused their efforts on developing training materials to educate everyone in the juvenile, family, and probate court systems about the impact of the new law.

Educational workshops have been provided by a broad-based group of subject matter experts on a statewide, regional and local basis. This initiative continues to impact, not only

the preservation of connections for Indian children, but also achieving permanency, as defined by the Indian community.

They have completed the following trainings and presentations:

- January 16, 2008: a training in Tehama County.
- January 28, 2008: an ICWA presentation at the Chadwick Conference in San Diego.
- January 31, 2008: conducted training in conjunction with Permanency Planning for Foster Youth in Care workshop.
- February 15, 2008: participated in an ICWA training in Humboldt County.
- February 25 and 27, 2008: conducted trainings mainly for probation officers in Monterey.
- March 11, 2008: conducted an ICWA training in San Bernardino.

As with each of the regional trainings, a resource binder was created for participants and has been made available on CD and posted on the Judicial Council's Web site located at:

<http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/programs/description/jrta-ICWAResourceBinder.htm>.

The Judicial Council is organizing and developing the content for an ICWA broadcast for court clerks and court personnel. They did a live broadcast on "ICWA 101" in April 2008. Additionally, the Council has scheduled trainings for Los Angeles County Probation and Santa Clara County Probation. They conducted an ICWA collaborative training in Mendocino County in May 2008. Also in May, they conducted an ICWA session for rural judges at the Cow County Institute.

The ICWA Initiative has completed charts for:

- Indian Child Welfare Act Requirements for Social Work Departments.
- Indian Child Welfare Act Requirements for Probation Departments.
- Findings and Orders for Probate Guardianship cases involving Indian Children.
- Findings and Orders for Juvenile cases involving Indian Children.

The ICWA Initiative is developing a toolkit to encourage and assist those wishing to establish a local court-tribal-county collaboration by sharing statewide the promising practices developed by local collaborations in California.

On December 12, 2007, as part of the Beyond the Bench, the CDSS and the Judicial Council held an ICWA pre-conference session that was part of the all-day workshop for judicial officers called "Juvenile Law Issues for Judicial Officers." Additionally, two other ICWA workshops were offered: "Avoiding Reversals in Delinquency and Dependency Cases under the Indian Child Welfare Act: and "Courts, Tribes, and Child Welfare: Improving the System."

### **Coordination with Tribes Regarding the Section 422 Protections for Children**

In 1953, Congress enacted Public Law (PL) 280, which required several states, including California, to assume criminal and some civil jurisdiction over all or part of Indian country within these states. PL 280 did not eliminate tribal jurisdiction. Although states were delegated criminal and civil jurisdiction, that jurisdiction remained concurrent with some



aspects of inherent tribal jurisdiction. However, not all tribes have developed courts and so not all tribes exercise their jurisdiction.

There continue to be very few Indian children in California under tribal jurisdiction, as only a small number of tribes have tribal courts and social services departments that could provide necessary services; partly due to the size of the tribes and the lack of adequate funding to the tribes for these services. For those tribes that do take jurisdiction, most often the initial contact regarding a family is made to the local child welfare agency who then contacts the tribe to allow them to take jurisdiction.

Many tribes and county child welfare agencies have developed protocols whereby they work together to provide child welfare services. A number of counties and tribes have convened ICWA roundtables/working groups which meet on a regular basis to discuss issues relative to the provision of child welfare services and how to better protect children. Some counties contact the tribal social services worker when an emergency response call is received allowing for both parties to respond to the family. Some tribes have services that can be provided early in the case to allow for the children and families to remain together. Counties are responsible for applying section 422 protections including the care and supervision of tribal children that remain under the state/county's jurisdiction. For tribes that enter into a Title IV-E agreement with the state, and assume responsibility for the care and supervision of tribal children, the tribe is responsible for applying section 422(b)(8) protections for those children, including six month periodic review, twelve-month permanency hearings, reunification services, services to achieve other permanency goals, pre-placement preventative services, etc.

The CDSS with tribes and the state DOJ conduct training sessions regarding the application of PL 280 in California on an as-needed basis.

## **Foster Care/Adoption Recruitment Plan**

## **FOSTER CARE/ADOPTION RECRUITMENT PLAN**

### **The CDSS' Role in the Family to Family Initiative**

Currently, there are 25 counties involved in Family to Family. All Family to Family counties are utilizing the Family to Family recruitment strategy, as well as the other three core strategies. In 2007, the Family to Family counties were divided into four regional cluster groups: Northern, Bay Area, Central/Coastal, and Southern. There were four regional cluster trainings, two Northern county trainings and one statewide conference held during 2007, which trained approximately 700 individuals. There were also three Family to Family coordinator meetings which are a forum for peer-to-peer information sharing and support. The Family to Family coordinators discuss relevant topics, such as recruitment, and share strategies to improve and retain resource families. In 2008/2009, Family to Family will continue holding coordinator meetings, technical assistance and training to Family to Family counties and the number of convenings for the upcoming year has not yet been determined. A Family to Family website is available with a wealth of information at [www.f2f.ca.gov](http://www.f2f.ca.gov) which is hosted and maintained by CDSS staff.

### **General Recruitment Activities**

#### **Family Builders by Adoption (California Kids Connection) Program**

The Family Builders by Adoption Program, California Kids Connection, is the California online adoption exchange registry of: (1) children whose placement plan is adoption and (2) qualified families approved for adoption by public and private agencies. An adoption exchange is an organized means of sharing information about available children and searching families. The exchange also facilitates permanence on a local, regional, statewide, and nationwide level for California's children. Services include an internet registry site, a photo listing book, exchange meetings, matching events, and training and education for caseworkers. In addition, Family Builders is the California Recruitment and Response Team for the National AdoptUSKids Campaign and works with the AdoptUSKids federal exchange. The contractor provides the CDSS with monthly data reports. These reports reflect cumulative totals of: children who are registered, successful matches, case outcomes, ethnicity, legal status, and trainings provided, as well as other statistical categories of data. Data specific to queries not currently listed on the reports may be extrapolated upon request.

At the present time, 78% of all public agencies participate in exchange meetings and list children on the exchange, as well as 75 private agencies that participate by listing families on the exchange site.

From March 1, 2007 – March 1, 2008, Family Builders by Adoption has recorded 187 matches attributable to state exchange activities, including the California Kids Connection website, exchange meetings, and matching events such as Family Fairs and matching picnics. During this time, California Kids Connection staff organized two matching picnics and two Family Fairs, and participated in one other matching picnic and two other Family Fairs. This number is higher than the yearly average for 2001 - 2007 (approximately 116/year).

Family Builders by Adoption attributes this year's higher number of matches to a focused effort at capturing outcome data, as well as a greater number of children listed on the public section of the website. On March 1, 2007, there were 561 children listed on California Kids Connection, and on March 1, 2008, there were 646 children listed on the website. Similarly, on March 1, 2007, there were 208 children registered in the public section of the website and on March 1, 2008, there were 305 children listed in the public section.

Lastly, the actual number of matches is higher than what is currently reported by Family Builders by Adoption. Unfortunately, county social workers routinely do not report outcomes to the California Kids Connection staff, or they may request that a child is removed from the website with no explanation of the removal. Family Builders by Adoption reminds county social workers to report more specific outcomes of children placed on the California Kids Connection website for tracking purposes. During the SFY 2007/08, Family Builders by Adoption reminded social workers of this at each exchange.

### **Foster Care Initiative (Assembly Bill 2129 – Chapter 1080, Statutes of 1993)**

This Foster Care Initiative makes funds available in the annual Governor's budget county allocations through the CDSS to support county recruitment efforts. All counties are responsible for recruiting foster and adoptive families and pursuant to the passage of AB 2129 are required to complete the annual year-end report/survey in order to be eligible for the funding. The report is designed to collect recruitment, training and retention program data and accomplishments achieved during the fiscal year. The counties are required to submit a year-end report outlining their recruitment, training and retention program data and accomplishments achieved during the fiscal year regardless if the activities are funded by AB 2129 funds, county funds, grants, contributions, or other funding streams. This data is compiled into a comprehensive report for statewide distribution via the internet (see below) that can be used by the state and counties in planning future activities. The Resource Family Recruitment, Training and Retention Annual Report 2007 is completed in collaboration with the community colleges, counties, and foster parent associations. In addition, the data from the online survey is shared with counties in a report that is sent out to all 58 counties and discussed at quarterly regional meetings, and at Family to Family meetings for resource families.

The 2007 report indicates many positive results, including a 56% increase in the amount of Kinship Emergency Funds being utilized by counties with 43 counties utilizing these funds. This increases the amount of Kin Care families in the state. Statewide, 52 counties designated 790 staff to the recruitment of resource families. Additionally, 43 counties had bilingual staff dedicated to resource family recruitment. Additionally, the report corroborated a long assumed belief that the most effective recruitment sources and materials utilized were other resource families/friends and word of mouth advertisements. The categories of children for which counties conducted specialized recruitment of potential resource families were youth ages 16 to 18 and youth with special needs. The categories of children most difficult to recruit for or place with resource families were adolescents with psychological or mental disabilities. The report further strengthened the resolve that enhanced recruitment, training and retention must continue in order to allow California's children in out-of-home placement an opportunity to live in safe, stable and permanent homes. Goals were in place in 49 counties to measure the success of resource family recruitment efforts. As a result, recruitment in 32 of these counties somewhat improved and significantly improved in 8

counties. The most frequently cited activities or goals to improve recruitment were to establish resource family appreciation events and conduct resource family training/initiate self-directed training.

The report can be accessed on the California Department of Social Services' Children and Families Services Division website at <http://www.childsworld.ca.gov>, under "Foster Care Reports" or the California Family to Family website at <http://www.f2f.ca.gov>, under the "What's New" section.

In addition to their annual report, many counties also addressed recruitment in their SIPs. In order to increase the number of resource families, a number of counties identified recruitment strategies in their SIPs. Some counties identified media outreach as part of their strategy. Others identified faith based outreach efforts, targeted recruitment (such as for sibling groups or older youth), education of the community on the need for foster parents and the children who need homes, media campaigns and booths at community events as their planned strategies to recruit more resource families. For the Foster Care Initiative, we have an online survey for the counties to complete, as explained above, and the annual year-end report comes from information contained in the survey.

### **Multi-Ethnic Placement Act/Interethnic Adoption Provision**

Los Angeles County has made efforts to recruit potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of the children served.

Although they have not yet had the refresher training on Multi-Ethnic Placement Act/Interethnic Adoption Provision<sup>1</sup>, Los Angeles County has consciously made an effort to recruit in the two ethnic and racial communities that most reflect the county's children, which are Latino and African American.

The Heart Gallery of waiting children was presented or displayed at the following events:

11/18/07	Latino Family Heath Fair	Latino community
12/8/08	Bethany Christian Church	African American community
2/13/08	Black History Celebration	African American community
4/1/08	National Association of Black Social Workers Conference	African American community
4/27/08	Fiesta Broadway	Latino Community

Further, during Black History month, there was a radio ad campaign on an African American radio station KDAY and participation in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Kingdom Day Parade.

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<sup>1</sup> Initial Multi-Ethnic Placement Act/Interethnic Adoption Provision training was provided through the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Adoption with a recommendation that follow-up training be provided by that organization. In subsequent conference calls with Region IX-ACF advised that additional training was "on hold" until the curriculum could be developed. The CDSS has recently submitted a new request for Multi-Ethnic Placement Act/Interethnic Adoption Provision training from the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Adoption.

On March 11, 2008 the Resource Family Recruitment section met with four Spanish speaking TV/Radio station representatives to discuss an ongoing recruitment campaign including featuring waiting Latino children in a format similar to Wednesday's Child on Fox 11 News in Los Angeles County.

There was a change in Los Angeles County's Recruitment Partnership Forum. This is a private/public collaboration to recruit in specific populations. At the 3/20/08 meeting, the groups were changed to have two of those groups focus on recruiting in the Latino and African American communities. Although they have only started, they set goals for the upcoming months. For the African American workgroup, their goals included having Recruitment Sundays in at least two African American churches and having a collaborative booth at the African Market Place. For the Latino workgroup, they will be contacting the Catholic Church Archdiocese about presenting for at least three Latino churches and putting bilingual flyers in their newsletters.

### **Toll-Free Hotline**

Some recruitment is done through the toll-free hotline. The hotline receives approximately 500 calls a month regarding Adoption and Foster Care. When a call comes in with a question regarding the Adoption or Foster Care process, the staff will answer the question if they know the answer. If not, the call will be directed to the welfare department in the county where the caller resides. Fifty-five percent of the calls come from Los Angeles, Sacramento and Orange counties. Calls are also received from Nevada and Arizona. The toll-free hot line number is 1-800-543-7487.

### **Substance Abuse/Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Infant Program**

(Formerly known as Options for Recovery)

The CDSS has the authority and funding to plan and implement services for court dependent children, aged 0-60 months, residing in out-of-home care that are substance-exposed or test positive for Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). All participating counties submit a county plan for approval to CDSS, specifically outlining a proposed budget, budget justification and detailed job specification for each requested staff position within the Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program.

The following counties are currently participating in this Program: Alameda, Butte, Glenn, Contra Costa, Monterey, San Francisco, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Cruz and Shasta. The philosophy of this program recognizes that drug and alcohol abuse is a disease that requires treatment and compassion. The service delivery consists of interagency collaboration, targeted recruitment, specialized training, respite care and support services for foster parents and federally-eligible relative caregivers.

### **Significant accomplishments**

#### **Alameda:**

- Cross Training/Breaking Down Barriers - this year was Challenge Day. Challenge Day is designed to unite members of any team to empower them to carry the theme of tearing down the walls of separation, and inspiring participants to create an environment of

compassion, acceptance and respect. Very well received by the participants who included foster parents, birth parents, department staff, drug and alcohol treatment staff, emancipated foster youth, faith community, and other community partners.

**Butte/Glenn:**

- Provided monthly Play Groups for the Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program children, their foster parents and relative caregivers. The Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program Manager, the Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program Coordinator, Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program, Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program Nurse/Trainer, Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program Parent Educator and a Physical Therapist and/or a Occupational Therapist were present at all the Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program Play Groups. The Play Groups provided an opportunity for the child to be observed and assessed by the professional team. It also provided the foster parents and relative caregivers an opportunity to meet and network with other caregivers.
- Conducted quarterly Sensory Integration Play Groups with Willow DeJesus, Occupational Therapist (Sensory Integration Certified) for children with sensory integration issues.
- Ongoing Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program foster parent mentoring program in Butte County.
- Conducted the Butte/Glenn Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program Foster Parent and Relative Caregivers Appreciation Event at Cal Skate in Chico on 3/19/08, and 110 participants attended.
- The Butte/Glenn Project currently has 89 foster homes (79 in Butte County and 10 in Glenn County).

**Contra Costa:**

- 35% of the total number of foster parents in Contra Costa County are now Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program graduates.
- 27% of the current year's graduates are relative caretakers compared to 9% last year. They increased their collaboration with the Relative Assessment Unit for an increased system of identifying approved relatives.
- 30% of their Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program foster parent graduates plan to adopt the children for whom they provide care.
- Support group meetings meet in three venues each month, an increase of one venue over last year. Altogether they will have offered 36 support group meetings this year. Speakers and on-going additional trainings are often offered at these meetings.

**Monterey:**

- Employs a Social Worker as a Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program Recruiter to increase the number of qualified, licensed foster placements for substance-exposed children. A half-time drug intervention specialist assesses and provides treatment to parents who have substance abuse history and are working toward reunification. Through the Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program grant, outreach efforts are provided to local communities to reach populations where poverty and drug abuse are a key factor.

**San Diego:**

- To date, their trained Spanish-speaking population consists of 19 foster parents and 3 relatives.

- They currently have 214 active foster parent and relative homes.
- Additional support, training and education were given to their Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program community after 3 foster child deaths of natural causes occurred within a one-month period. This included an intimate meeting with the effected foster parents, the Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program support leader, Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program Foster Home Listing staff, and agency staff psychologist. Additionally, three monthly support meetings/trainings consisting of agency and community staff were tailored to meet the specific issues surrounding these deaths and the impact on foster families.

#### **San Francisco:**

- Added two additional cycles of training, one in English and one in Spanish.
- Established a strong collaboration with the San Francisco Department of Public Health.
- Employed part-time Public Health Nurse to facilitate the Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program training in both Spanish and English.
- Added a Relative Caregiver Social Worker to work with their relative caregivers and advise them of resources available to them.

#### **San Luis Obispo:**

- Recruited five additional Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program.
- Collaborated with their local community college to bring top trainers to their area.
- Finished the fifth year of the Foster Parent Academy, and the second year of the Birth Parent Academy trainings.
- Started planning All County Retreat.

#### **Santa Cruz:**

- Making efforts to increase their knowledge and skill base around providing services to substance-affected children in their county. To that end, they will be sending a group of their service providers (children's mental health, county public health nurse, a local physician, and social worker) to Chicago, Illinois, to train with Dr. Ira Chasnoff at the National Training Institute. They are also working closely with the Monterey County Screening for Assessment, Referral, and Treatment program, to learn everything that they can that will assist them in bringing these services to Santa Cruz County.

#### **Shasta:**

- Trained 223 professionals on issues related to their children at their professional cross training.
- Their alcohol and drug specialist has begun a comprehensive support program for birth parents of Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program eligible children.
- Foster parent recruitment rate has equaled their closure rate, keeping their number of foster homes stable.

#### **Changes**

##### **Butte/Glenn:**

- Planning to hire a new Parent Educator for the Butte/Glenn Program as Chelcee Janak, their current Parent Educator, has resigned to pursue a nursing career.



- Networking with community partners by changing their play group facility to a local church within the Chico community.

#### **Monterey:**

- The most significant change, particular to this fiscal year, is the increasing number of foster parents and relative/Non-Relative Extended Family Member caregivers who are requesting respite services. In SFY 2007/08, the state allocated additional money for respite to meet this need. However, despite the additional allocation, they continue to actualize a shortfall in this area.
- The Resource and Support Unit, made up of placement specialists who work with the caregivers, has developed a methodology of tracking and authenticating each respite claim to assure that each claimant qualifies for the Program. There are three layers of authorization required before claims are sent to their Finance Division for reimbursement.

#### **San Diego:**

- Spanish speaking Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program caregivers' community has become more united. This growing community is able to rely on one another on a daily basis. They provide respite for each other and learn from one another. This added support, along with the support provided by the Spanish speaking staff in their program, allows the caregivers to maintain possibly difficult placements long term, minimizing multiple placements and further traumatization of the children.

#### **Santa Cruz:**

- Added a relative caregiver support person to their Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program team. This person is charged with providing information, mentoring and support to relative caregivers of their Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program-eligible children. She also makes every effort to encourage relative caregivers to participate in Traditions of Caring training (Santa Cruz County relative caregivers are not required to participate in this training in order to care for a Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program-eligible child).

#### **Shasta:**

- Has begun working intensely with their Kinship Care Liaison in an attempt to better meet the needs of their kinship care providers.

#### **Barriers**

##### **Alameda:**

- No identifiable barriers.

##### **Butte/Glenn:**

- Experiencing difficulty with Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program foster families being able to transport children to visits with their birth families due to the rising fuel costs in their country. In some cases the Juvenile Court is ordering daily visits between birth parents and their children. Many foster parents are expressing financial hardships providing more than two visits per week due to the rural nature of Butte and Glenn counties.

- Supervision of parental visits with Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program children is difficult as of late, as Butte County Children's Services is currently experiencing a Social Service Aide shortage due to medical leaves and a hiring freeze in Butte County.

#### **Contra Costa:**

- They temporarily changed the location of one of their fall 2007 Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program training series and found that this location was too remote, too small, and too inconvenient for both class members and teachers. As a result, a new location was chosen for spring 2008 training series. A new class recently started in the new location and they now have almost tripled the number of participants.

#### **Monterey:**

- Along with increased utilization of the Respite Program, Monterey County has had to reduce the number of respite hours allowed per family. For several years, caregivers who qualified through the standards were allowed 48 hours of respite per month per family. Over-utilization of the Respite Program has required us to reduce the hours of respite to 12 hours per month per family. This fiscal year alone, 56 families have regularly used respite services.

#### **San Diego:**

- The San Diego County, October 2008, wildfires directly affected a great number of their Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program foster parents and their families. Many were evacuated from their homes and communities for several days. Even after some communities were cleared to return to their homes, foster parents chose to remain out of their home due to the poor air and water quality as it would affect the special needs children in their care. This created a financial and emotional stress for the existing Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program families as well as for foster parents scheduled to attend their training. Due to this crisis they chose to cancel the training scheduled for November.

#### **San Francisco:**

- Would like to expand their respite program by adding a 2 tier system to allow foster parents to choose who they want to care for their children. At this time they only have one tier through a contracted agency. By adding the 2nd tier it would allow foster parents to receive more respite hours and allow them their hours without restrictions.

#### **Santa Cruz:**

- Difficulty getting placement information to their provider could be improved by contacting caregivers of Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program-eligible children to advise them about the services for which they are eligible.

#### **Shasta:**

- The largest barrier at present is in internal operations. The contracting and purchase order request approval process within the county is complicated and lengthy. It hampers their ability to move efficiently in implementing the Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program. This issue is being addressed with their program management and administration and will hopefully be resolved. As of yet, they still have not found an effective manner to fully engage their kinship care providers.

## **Plans for the future**

### **Alameda:**

- Another Challenge day for the Cross Training/Breaking Down Barriers this year.

### **Butte/Glen:**

- Began spring 2008 Butte/Glenn Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program 40-Hour & Infant Massage Training on 4/1/08 for prospective foster parents and relative caregivers.
- Hosted the Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program Cross Training on 5/19/08, at the Masonic Family Center in Chico. This year's conference topic was be on opiate addiction and recovery and medical management of the neonate withdrawing from opiates. The presenters were Dr. Paul Kreis and Dr. Nirupama Subramanian from UC Davis.
- Building collaboration with First Five Program who provides behavioral health services for Butte County children birth to five years of age.

### **Contra Costa:**

- Planning to collaborating with the county's Family, Maternal & Child Health Services to provide cross-training to staff and mutual services providers.

### **Monterey:**

- Monterey County will be looking at more equitable ways to provide respite to caregivers of substance-exposed children and provide additional Parents as Teachers services to create positive role modeling and to reduce the cycle of substance abuse in their communities. At the same time, without utilizing Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program funding, they are putting an emphasis on parent-child participation during visitation, structured visitation for children and their families, and providing guidance to the parents on how to interface with their children using a strength-based model.

### **San Diego:**

- Currently negotiating a new 7-year contract with Rady Children's Hospital.
- Planning for a one day cross-training featuring Constance Lillas, Ph.D. Dr. Lillas specializes in identifying and treating traumatized infants and children.

### **San Francisco:**

- Increase number of Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program respite hours by adding a second tier.
- Continue to expand the Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program by doing more outreach to the community and drug treatment programs and the San Francisco County Jail.
- Continue to focus on recruiting relative and non-relative caregivers.

### **San Luis Obispo:**

- Expand their parenting classes throughout the counties and to continue providing extensive training classes to their foster parents.

**Santa Cruz:**

- Will attempt to expand direct services to substance-exposed children in the form of a Monterey County Screening for Assessment, Referral, and Treatment-type program. Children ages 0-5 are identified as a service priority in their county's System Improvement Plan. This effort will fit appropriately into those parameters.
- Continue to develop methods for increasing participation of kin caregivers in the Traditions of Caring training.

**Shasta:**

- This next fiscal year will have an emphasis on relative training and support. With kinship care having a large focus in the placement of children these days, one quarter of all of their Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program children are placed with relatives. However, few are trained and well supported. They are hoping to complete a needs assessment and determine how they can restructure their program to better meet their needs. Using their parent partners, they are going to introduce elements of the 36 hour training to the birth parents, in an attempt to help them become more successful upon return of their children to their care.

**Specialized Training for Adoptive Parents (STAP)**

This program provides specialized recruitment, training and services to pre-adoptive/adoptive parents of children born HIV positive and/or substance exposed. The program is designed to assist the adoption of medically fragile children who are dependent children of the court, have an adoption case plan, and reside with pre-adoptive or adoptive parents. There are currently 9 counties participating in the Program (Monterey, Santa Cruz, Shasta, San Luis Obispo, Mendocino, Riverside, El Dorado, San Francisco and Santa Clara).

Monterey County projects that in the current fiscal year, 45 families will receive one-on-one training by mentor parents, and 78 families will attend group trainings. Santa Cruz County offers training and support groups in English and Spanish on the adoption process, mental health issues for infants and young children, ADHD, and drug exposure. In SFY 2007/08, approximately 240 people received monthly training and support. Shasta County has trained approximately 50 people this fiscal year.

Monterey County has a successful model mentor program, in which mentors are selected by the adoption staff and are experienced foster and adoptive parents who have raised adopted children with special needs. San Luis Obispo County organizes an annual retreat, which doubled in participant numbers from the prior year. Santa Cruz County has also developed a mentoring component to a program providing specialized care for adoptive parents. In Monterey County all mentors have completed Purposeful Visitation training to support birth parents and establish guidelines for successful parent-child visits. In a continuing effort to provide broad-based training, Santa Cruz County has increased efforts to obtain, train and direct mentors as service providers. Shasta County began a television recruitment campaign that features a child on Monday's news program who is seeking a concurrent planning family for the child. They are also recruiting potential families by running commercials on the local television channel. Pictures of children are also placed in the Shasta County Heart Gallery. The photos are located throughout the county and on their website.

## **Barriers**

Participating counties have reported barriers, including the loss of caregiving families due to attrition. Some of these families were homes that finalized an adoption and no longer chose to do foster care. There is also a struggle to provide respite care to meet the need of families. Obtaining referrals to the program for eligible caregivers is a barrier. San Luis Obispo County overcame a significant barrier to provider participation by making child care available on-site during training classes. Counties are developing new policy and training procedures families and mentors, and new collaboration opportunities. For example, Santa Cruz is developing innovative ways of generating referrals and to increase and improve outreach to kinship providers. Shasta County has experienced difficulty getting social workers to create placements with concurrent planning families during the reunification process. This was solved through training and education; the establishment of a concurrent planning multi-disciplinary team and by the creation and support of adoptive and pre-adoptive parent liaison support groups.

## **Foster Care Month**

The 2008 State Capitol Foster Care Month Kickoff Event was May 6, 2008. Events for this year include an Education Summit and Event Reception on May 5, 2008, a Heart Gallery Exhibit at the State Capitol and a Foster Parents Walk-a-Thon. On June 7, 2008, a Heart Gallery Exhibit and fundraiser was held in Sacramento County.

## **Other Activities**

### **Alameda County Group Home Family Preservation (formerly, Alameda County's Group Home StepUp Project: Moving Up & Out of Congregate Care)**

The Alameda County's Group Home StepUp Project: Moving Up & Out of Congregate Care was funded through assistance from Casey Family Programs and the California Permanency for Youth Project. This was a six-month project designed to improve the long-term outcomes for adolescents in group home care. Alameda County made a commitment to focus on "mining" cases and using web based search technology to find family members. The target group was youth, ages 11-18 years, who had been placed in group home care for a significant length of time.

After a successful 6-month pilot, Alameda County instituted a permanent, full unit of County Child Welfare Staff (8 FTE) and Unit Supervisor to continue the good work accomplished in the "StepUp Project." The unit is now named "Group Home Family Preservation" and remains embedded within the Department's Group Home units, in an effort to continue to produce improved permanency outcomes for youth residing in congregate care. Further, the program still benefits from the in-kind contribution of a part time social worker from the County's local Casey Family Program's office.

To date, the program has worked with over 150 youth, and seen approximately 120 cases through to completion. The program is successful in finding permanent family placements for nearly 50% of the youth served, and continues to be successful in securing relational

permanency for a number of youth who remain in congregate care after the program's completion, often for older youth emancipating from the system.

The program continues to collaborate closely with Casey Family Programs and a number of other local Community Based Organizations, particularly Mental Health Service Providers. Recently, the County implemented a new Wrap Around Program and has coordinated the activity of both programs which share the same outcome goals.

### **Specific Progress and Accomplishments Related to Diligent Recruitment**

Throughout the year, the 11 largest counties meet twice a year for a “convening/training” around topics such as recruitment/training and retention of foster parents, youth permanence and disproportionality. Through the UC Berkeley Center for Research, the counties are provided information on how to self-evaluate through the collection, analysis and interpretation of data about child and family to find out where they are making progress and to determine where they need to make changes in practice. The CDSS, in partnership with the Annie E. Casey Foundation, provided the technical assistance and training to these counties.

The Resource Family Recruitment, Training and Retention Annual Report for SFY 2007/08 for AB 2129 funding will be released in September of 2008. Participating counties will be asked about their activities, goals and/or resources, and how effective their recruitment methods were in SFY 2007/08. This will continue through SFY 2008/09.

The 2006/07 Resource Family Recruitment, Training and Retention Annual Report addressed several questions concerning the recruitment of potential foster/adoptive families that reflected the ethnic and racial diversity of the children in foster care. Counties were asked if any bilingual staff were available for the recruitment of resource families. Forty-three counties had bilingual staff dedicated to resource family recruitment. All these counties had staff fluent in Spanish. Counties were also asked to indicate any difficulty in placing foster youth due to language and cultural differences. Twenty-seven counties responded that there were difficulties in placing foster youth because of language and cultural differences. Counties were also asked if they conducted specialized recruitment for children of ethnic and racial diversity in their county. UC Berkeley continues to provide information to counties at all Family to Family Convening's regarding their data and has developed a new dynamic reporting interface which allows users to produce custom data tables.

In the most recent Resource Family Recruitment Training and Retention Annual Report, the CDSS provided a general view of the cultural and linguistic challenges reported by counties in placing foster youth. In their survey responses, 26 of 58 counties reported such challenges: Alameda, Butte, Contra Costa, Del Norte, Glenn, Humboldt, Imperial, Lake, Lassen, Mendocino, Merced, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Shasta, Solano, Sonoma, Tulare, and Yolo. The purpose of the Report was not to evaluate the effectiveness of county recruitment efforts but to provide an overall view of the continued need for such efforts. Resource family recruitment remains at the county level to ensure that regional needs are addressed.

The following 26 counties indicated on their 2006/2007 Resource Family Recruitment Training and Retention Annual Report that they conducted specialized recruitment for children of ethnic and racial diversity: Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Imperial, Kern, Los Angeles, Marin, Mendocino, Monterey, Napa, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, Stanislaus, Tehama, Tulare and Ventura. Although these counties conduct specialized resource family recruitment as appropriate, they do not report to the CDSS the degree to which their recruitment efforts overcome local placement challenges.

## **Adoptions Program**



## **ADOPTIONS PROGRAM**

### **Intercountry Adoption**

#### **Activities That the State Has Undertaken For Children Adopted From Other Countries, Including the Provision of Adoption and Post Adoption Services**

Under California law (Family Code section 8900 et seq.), the provision of intercountry adoption services fall exclusively within the purview of licensed private adoption agencies and adoption facilitators. In order for an agency to obtain an adoption agency license to provide intercountry adoption services in California, the agency must be an entity accredited by the Council on Accreditation or supervised by an accredited primary provider. California now requires ALL intercountry adoption agencies, both custodial and non-custodial, to be accredited, regardless of whether they are completing adoptions in Convention or non-Convention countries.

In order for an adoption facilitator to provide intercountry adoption services in the United States, the individual **MUST** be approved by the Council on Accreditation and registered with the California Department of Social Services.

When a California agency is acting as the primary provider (PP) in an intercountry adoption, they must have an agreement with any supervised provider (SP) in the foreign country which, among other things:

1. Identifies the lines of authority between the PP and SP, the PP employee responsible for supervision, and the SP employee responsible for compliance with the written agreement;
2. Delineates how billing and fees will be billed, collected, and refunded;
3. Requires that the SP meet certain personnel qualifications;
4. Requires the SP to safeguard personal data;
5. Requires the SP to respond to certain requests for data;
6. Requires the SP to disclose any negative actions taken against the supervised provider by the Council on Accreditation or any licensing authority; and
7. Identifies the adoption services to be provided by the foreign SP;
8. Provides that if the foreign SP is to provide medical or social information, it must comply with 22 CFR 96.49(d) through (j);
9. Provides that the foreign SP adhere to the Hague Convention's prohibition on child buying and have written policies in place reflecting such and provides training to its employees on these policies; and
10. Provides that the foreign SP NOT compensate its employees on a per child or contingent fee basis.

California licensed intercountry adoption agencies perform home studies on prospective adoptive parents, provide required post-placement supervision on adoptions finalized in California, and may provide post-finalization supervision as required by the child's native country if the adoption is finalized in that country. Agencies also assist with re-adoption if

required. Additional information about California's intercountry adoption program may be found in Title 22, California Code of Regulations section 35241 et seq.

**Children Who are Adopted From Other Countries and Who Enter Into State Custody as a Result of the Disruption of a Placement for Adoption or the Dissolution of an Adoption, Including the Number of Children, the Agencies Who Handled the Placement or the Adoption, the Plans for the Child, and the Reasons for the Disruption or Dissolution**

Pursuant to Family Code 8903(c), if the agency fails to meet its responsibility with respect to a child in a failed adoption, and the child becomes a dependent of California, California will assume financial responsibility for the child.

In March 2008, the California Department of Social Services adoptions district offices, who have the sole responsibility for investigating all petitions to set-aside adoptions (dissolutions) in California, reported that in the last year, there have been no dissolutions of intercountry adoptions.

CDSS has no reports of disrupted or dissolved intercountry adoptions in which children are returned to foster care. This data is not currently captured in the CWS/CMS application.

For any children who came to the United States for the purpose of adoption but entered foster care prior to the finalization of the adoption, California law requires that a prior agreement be made between the private intercountry adoption agency facilitating the adoption and the country of the child's origin to address who will take responsibility of the child if such a disruption occurs. In these cases either the private adoption agency will take care, custody and control of the child or the child will be sent back to their country of origin who will resume responsibility for the child.

## **Cross-Jurisdictional Plan and Probation Data**

## **CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL PLAN AND RESOURCES**

The CDSS has continued to increase the use of cross-jurisdictional resources for adoptive placements, which include recruitment strategies such as the California Kids Connection (CKC) Program/Website. Statewide, five programs have met monthly to share specific information regarding family and children. A support coordinator is responsible for assisting in matching waiting children with available families identified by the exchange. This website has both a secure and a public website. The public website is accessible to any Internet user. Visitors indicate their interest in specific children by sending an e-mail to the placing agency identified for each child. Many public adoption agencies throughout the state also maintain their own website featuring children who are available for adoption.

AdoptUSKids website is the result of the Children's Bureau Initiative, a collaborative funded by the Adoption Exchange Association, Health and Human Services/Administration for Children and Families and the Children's Bureau. The CKC Recruitment Response Team is a part of the Children's Bureau's national recruitment initiative campaign for finding potential adoptive families. California's adoption exchange program, CKC provides several important services, all of which have the final goal of finding permanent homes for children who are available and waiting in the foster care system.

CKC has been very successful in finding permanent homes for our foster children/youth. For the quarter ending March 2008, an average of 628 children were listed:

- 48% of the children were on the public section of the website.
- 52% were on the secure section of the website.
- 77% were children of color.
- 54% were over the age of 12.

There was a monthly average of 968 inquiries by qualified and approved families during this period and 48 children were reported as being matched through CKC. At the present time, 78% of all public agencies participate in exchange meetings and list children on the exchange, as well as 75 private agencies that participate by listing families on the exchange site.

## CHILD WELFARE SERVICES CASES TRANSFERRED TO PROBATION

Description of the number of children under the care of the county child protection system who are transferred into the custody of the county juvenile probation system.

### Methodology

Two separate data files were created for the year under review using an extract from the CWS/CMS. The first file represented closed child welfare supervised placements. The second file represented Probation supervised placements with start dates within the same year. Children that appeared in both files were unduplicated and counted. Please see the following data table for results.

### CWS/CMS

Children with WIC 300 and WIC 601/602 authority codes within a given year\*

Federal Fiscal Years	Number of Children
1999/2000	559
2000/2001	644
2001/2002	709
2002/2003	643
2003/2004	815
2004/2005	994
2005/2006	1,013
2006/2007	771

### \*Data Caveat:

This data should be considered preliminary, as the state is still exploring the most accurate data method to identify this population as well as a means of validating the data. Data from the CWS/CMS, California's Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) system, is able to identify the number of children in out-of-home placement supervised by CWS, who have been terminated from a CWS placement, then subsequently placed in a Probation-supervised placement within a given Federal Fiscal Year. We cannot measure the duration of time this process takes until a system change occurs to track end dates for legal authority changes.

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

**CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION  
AND  
TREATMENT ACT (CAPTA)**

**APPLICATION  
for  
Federal Fiscal Year (FFY)  
2009**

**CFS-101**

**June 30, 2008**

**State of California  
Department of Social Services**

**CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT ACT**

**APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR (FFY) 2009 FUNDING  
PLAN FOR FEDERAL FISCAL YEARS 2005-2009**

**APPLICANT AGENCY:**

**State of California, Department of Social Services**

**Organizational Unit:**

Office of Child Abuse Prevention  
744 P Street, M.S. 11-82  
Sacramento, California 95814

**Designated Child Abuse and Neglect State Liaison Officer with NCCAN:**

Linné Stout, Acting Branch Chief  
Child Protection and Family Support Branch  
(916) 651-6600

**Application Information Contact:**

Teresa Contreras, Chief  
Office of Child Abuse Prevention  
(916) 651-6960

**Applicant Agency's Employer Identification Number:**

94-6001347

## **Introduction**

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Plan is the primary prevention component of the State's Child and Family Services IV-B Plan, which is also referred to as the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP). The programs, services, and activities outlined in the CAPTA component are linked to the following goals and objectives of the entire CFSP plan:

- **Safety Outcome**

Goal 1: Children are first, and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect; they are safely maintained in their homes whenever appropriately possible and provided services to protect them.

- **Well Being Outcome**

Goal 3: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate; families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs; children, youth and families are active participants in the case planning process; and children receive adequate and appropriate services to meet their educational, physical and mental health needs.

It is the state's intent to ensure a clear link between CAPTA and the Title IV-B CFSP goals by utilizing CAPTA funds to enhance community capacity to ensure the safety of children and promote the well-being of children and families. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS), through its Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP), uses the CAPTA grant, in combination with other funds such as Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) and state funds from the Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (CAPIT) Program and the state Children's Trust Fund to support counties, family resource centers, and other community based organizations through grants, contracts and interagency agreements to promote child abuse prevention and to provide early intervention services that serve children and families within their own communities whenever possible.

When evaluating the programs that provide the services and the training necessary to ensure that there is the sufficient capacity to keep children safe and to enhance the well being of children and families, CDSS/OCAP reviews the activities and assesses the results associated with these specific programs. The following is a report on the CDSS/OCAP programs and activities for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2007. Discussions of future directions address FFY 2008 and FFY 2009.

There have been no substantive changes in state law that could affect California's eligibility for CAPTA funds.

## **Identification of Program Areas Selected for Improvement**

Area 8: Developing and facilitating training protocols for individuals mandated to report child abuse and neglect.



Area 12: Developing and enhancing the capacity of community-based programs to integrate shared leadership strategies between parents and professionals to prevent and treat child abuse and neglect at the neighborhood level.

Area 14: Supporting and enhancing collaboration among public health agencies, the child protection system and private community-based programs to provide child abuse and neglect prevention and treatment services (including linkages with education systems) and to address the health needs, including the mental health needs, of children identified as abused or neglected, including supporting prompt, comprehensive health and developmental evaluations for children who are the subject of substantiated child maltreatment reports.

## **PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AREA 8: PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, SERVICES AND TRAINING**

### **Mandated Reporter Training**

#### **Program Description**

In response to the increasing numbers of mandated reporters requiring training, CDSS continues to focus on the availability and accessibility of mandated reporter training. Free online training is offered, and in all instances, attendance, consumer profile and consumer satisfaction data are collected for this online training. The mandated reporter training is offered through a grant with University of California, Davis. In July 2007, CDSS/OCAP contracted with the Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice, the Center for Human Services, University of California Davis Extension. Prior to this, the contract was with Sonoma State University.

#### **Objective**

To provide online mandated reporter training, training of trainers, and educational materials.

#### **Activities/Results**

A basic online training for mandated reporters was placed on the web during FFY 2003. The training was developed by subject matter experts, in cooperation with CDSS. The materials were developed to both enhance other forms of mandated reporter training (e.g., classroom) and/or provide stand-alone mandated reporter training to participants at-home and to other participants. Continuing education units are provided for a minimal fee upon request. Currently, from July 2007 through January 2008, the number completing the online training through the UCD Extension is 1,107. Previously over a three year period, while the contract was with Sonoma State, the number of people trained was 7,118 (March 2003-September 30, 2006). The RCCFP is pursuing the ability to offer BRN credits.

Some challenges experienced in the past year include: it took longer than anticipated for the UCD Extension program to get the web site developed for the online training, and to address how to reach out to more mandated reporters to notify them of the change in contractors. Changes with the program are in process, including that the online training program is currently somewhat difficult to find on the internet.

## **Strategies: Family Resource Center (FRC) and Family Support Program Training and Technical Assistance**

### **Program Description/Objectives**

The CDSS/OCAP developed a consortium of three regional training centers, Strategies, to enhance the capacity of FRCs and family support programs (FSPs) throughout California to provide services to strengthen families. Strategies is comprised of three non-profit organizations: Youth for Change/Paradise Ridge FRC in Butte County (Region 1); Interface Children Family Services in Ventura County (Region 2) and, the Children's Bureau of Southern California with offices in Los Angeles and Orange Counties (Region 3).

Many of the FRCs and FSPs that Strategies works with offer comprehensive support services that include case management, home visitation, child abuse/neglect treatment, family health and wellness, family economics, self sufficiency, family literacy, substance abuse treatment, youth development, and community development. Strategies works with professionals, paraprofessionals, volunteers, and parents by providing training and technical assistance in a myriad of areas including home visitation, team case management, non-profit management, public and private partnerships, and community leadership.

Techniques employed by Strategies in servicing programs entail providing on-site consultations, teleconferences, online communications, lending libraries, face-to-face group training, meeting facilitation, coaching, and office/phone consultation. Additionally, Strategies fosters communication among FRCs and FSPs through its comprehensive website and quarterly newsletter.

The funding for the Strategies training and technical assistance project is being extended through June 30, 2011.

### **Objective**

To increase the capacity and expertise of FRCs and family support programs throughout California, Strategies will deliver three, three-day comprehensive FRC core trainings per year; conduct three peer review trainings per year (approximately 20 organizations will participate); implement leadership training for up to 25 organizations; conduct a teleconference series and provide six capacity building events.

### **Activities/Results**

**FRC Core Trainings:** The FRC Core Training is designed to cover key elements of FRC operation. The curriculum was updated to reflect changes in policy and practice in the field of family support. The three day training was delivered in four locations across the state to a total of 112 participants.

**Peer Review:** The peer review process acts as a networking tool as it facilitates a self-reflective process that nurtures trust and self-disclosure within a working partnership of FRCs.

These partnerships evaluate and strengthen the approaches and services offered by the participating FRCs. Through participation in peer review, FRCs develop an enhanced awareness of statewide issues affecting them, gain feedback regarding the effectiveness of services in meeting families' needs, identify strengths and challenges, and develop greater connections with other FRCs.

Strategies provides individual coaching to strengthen the follow-up technical assistance portion of the peer review process, which is designed to help participants achieve their goals.

**Sustainability Project:** During this reporting period, as of June 2008, a total of 60 family resource centers and family strengthening organizations have completed the project, collectively receiving over 2,000 hours of individual and group technical assistance. The benefits to participating FRCs include gaining knowledge from the self-assessment experience and forming close relationships with their partnering FRCs.

**Teleconference Series:** As a training tool, the teleconference series is used to connect participants from across the state to expert trainers. Designed with two tracks (FRC Fundamentals and Non-profit Management) the teleconference series serves:

- To act as a training vehicle in program, organizational development, and professional development.
- To facilitate networking among FRCs across the state. On average, fifteen participants joined each session.

Given the vast geographical distances between FRCs, the teleconference series provides urban, rural, and suburban FRCs an opportunity to communicate with one another without the impediments of distance, cost, and time incurred through physical travel. The following are topics for this reporting period:

- Successful Grant Writing for Sustainability.
- Involving Parents in Your FRC.
- Domestic Violence.
- Supporting Families with Special Needs children.
- Connecting Child & Parent.
- Nurturing Volunteers for a Successful FRC.
- Community Development.
- Effective Time Management: Tools and Tricks.
- Involving Fathers in Your FRC.
- Political Engagement: Do's and Don'ts.

**Capacity-Building Events:**

Strategies' trainings and workshops were attended by over 6,511 participants during this reporting period. Strategies also provided over 465 hours of individual technical assistance to

600 agencies in 55 counties. During these sessions, Strategies staff helped build individual capacity amongst family support staff in a variety of areas pertinent to non-profit management, sustainability, program development, facility management, and family support principles. Strategies provided 1,200 hours of group technical assistance to 275 agencies in 43 counties. In addition to the FRC core training series described above, regional trainings were delivered in response to local requests or emerging needs. The topics covered by these training sessions are included below:

Training Topics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case Management</li> <li>• Successful Grant Writing For Sustainability</li> <li>• Involving Parents in Your FRC</li> <li>• Beyond the Rhetoric HPP</li> <li>• Community Development</li> <li>• Home visitor Safety</li> <li>• Domestic Violence</li> <li>• Supporting Families with Special Needs Children</li> <li>• Community Development</li> <li>• Enhancing Programs that Support Youth</li> <li>• Compulsive Hoarding: Partnerships for Successful Treatment</li> <li>• Parent Involvement</li> <li>• HPP Real Tools for Real Situations</li> <li>• FRC-able Ventura County</li> <li>• Making It Happen: Quality Programs</li> <li>• Self Care (Making it Happen)</li> <li>• Special Needs</li> <li>• Transforming the Central Valley Community</li> <li>• Building Blocks to the Future</li> <li>• Peer Review Day 2</li> <li>• Adolescents &amp; Drug Usage: Training for Providers</li> <li>• Collaborating with FRCs for Leisure Programming</li> <li>• FRC core Training</li> <li>• Understanding Family Violence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Males as Positive Forces</li> <li>• Connecting Child and Parent</li> <li>• Nurturing Volunteers for a Successful FRC</li> <li>• CWDA Matrix Presentation</li> <li>• Parenting and therapy Beyond Logic, Consequences, and Control</li> <li>• The Power of Feelings</li> <li>• Techniques for Engaging Clients, Setting Boundaries, Preventing Burnout</li> <li>• Social conditioning Matrix</li> <li>• Political Engagement Do's and Don'ts</li> <li>• Involving Fathers in Your FRC</li> <li>• Matrix Reliability Testing</li> <li>• Home Visiting Next Steps</li> <li>• High Performing Partnerships in Service</li> <li>• Peer Review Day 1</li> <li>• Sustainable FRCs</li> <li>• Differential Response Overview</li> <li>• Impact of Depression</li> <li>• Family Economic Success</li> <li>• HPP Faith Based</li> <li>• Emotional Intelligence to Help Children Make Choices</li> <li>• Regional convening San Diego</li> <li>• Amphetamines &amp; Personal Safety for Home Visitors</li> <li>• Bouncing Ahead: Emotional Intelligence to Build Optimism</li> <li>• Celebrating Others: Teaching Empathy and Acceptance</li> <li>• Recovery is Possible</li> </ul>

To promote success, key lessons learned from Strategies' Leadership Academy, which has ended, have been incorporated into Strategies' new projects: the sustainability project, the family development matrix, high performance partnerships, and community development training. The design of each project includes a team capacity building approach to be followed by on-site structured technical assistance.

## **Objective**

To increase the utilization of promising practices and improve the quality of services for home visitation and family support programs, Strategies will provide 80 hours of training per year in the areas of in-home visitation, supervision, case management and family support strategies.

## **Activities/Results**

The case management and home visitation trainings are highly interactive, two-day training sessions. The case management training continues to meet a critical need in the family strengthening field, with many family support professionals working in the field having little training in this area. Staff are introduced to the fundamental concepts of case planning, assessment and evaluation through lecture and interactive activities.

Two home visiting trainings are offered throughout the state. The two-day Home Visiting Essentials training, which was presented in each region, utilizes a case study to engage participants. In response to requests, Strategies developed and presented a third day of home visitor training, which addresses complex issues such as domestic violence and the use of methamphetamines and other controlled substances in the home.

The locations of these trainings throughout the state show not only the challenge of serving a state as diverse as California, but Strategies' commitment to meeting that challenge. For example, during this reporting period training was conducted as far north as Shasta County and as far south as Los Angeles County. Other locations included Santa Cruz, Kern, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties.

## **Future Directions**

CDSS/OCAP will fund Strategies for an additional three year period, July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2011.

## **Objective**

To increase networking among FRCs statewide and regionally, Strategies will provide a statewide listserv, maintain an effective web site, disseminate the "Working Strategies" newsletter, add networking activities to all training activities, and convene regional meetings for the purpose of promoting peer-to-peer communications.

## **Activities/Results**

Web page and listserv: In FFY 2006 a statewide listserv, known as "Strategies Announce," has become a key resource for publicizing trainings. It is being used increasingly as a tool for

staff recruitment by the FRCs. The Strategies website, [www.familyresourcecenters.net](http://www.familyresourcecenters.net), provides up to date information regarding trainings and other services provided by Strategies. During this report period, over 45,000 visits were made to the website. The website, however, does not track the many visitors who enter through the link provided on the Strategies' training calendar. Therefore, the total numbers of visitors is greater than those counted.

**Working Strategies Newsletter:** The four issues of the newsletter produced and disseminated during this reporting period were made available via download from the Strategies' website, distribution through the Strategies' statewide mailing list, and mailing of hard copies. In an effort to continue content quality and relevancy to the family support field, topics were chosen to reflect consumers' areas of interest, as well as current trends and issues of concern to those within the state. The lead articles for this reporting period include:

- Summer 2007 – Leadership Change Ahead.
- Fall 2007 – Promoting Family Economic Success for Immigrants.
- Winter 2007 – Nonprofits and Democracy.
- Spring 2007 – FSAs are Getting Good Outcomes.

**Network Development:** Network development has been approached through three interlocking ways: participation, partnership, and provision.

- **Participation:** Strategies' staff participates in FRC networks by first seeking out new, emerging or established networks and then becoming active network members. By attending meetings and generally contributing to network activities, Strategies staff members build essential relationships within the network and contribute to FRC development.
- **Partnership:** Strategies' staff partner with networks by developing network-specific training and technical assistance plans and co-sponsoring training and other network activities.
- **Provision:** Strategies' staff members provide services to networks by assisting with the development and implementation of network training plans and providing network-specific technical assistance.

This year Strategies assisted 139 agencies by providing 87 hours of technical assistance toward the development of networks and identifying promising practices to assist FRCs with quality improvement of service delivery. The following list summarizes the diverse areas of support Strategies has provided FRC networks:

- Retreat Facilitation.
- Strategic Planning Assistance.
- Training and technical assistance to strengthen partnerships between public and private agencies.
- Assistance in developing network wide training and TA plans.
- Co-sponsorship or co-development of conferences and convenings.
- Development of trainings customized to meet specific to network needs.
- Sharing of resources (such as standards, and decision-making structures) across networks.

- Training and TA in implementation of the Family Development Matrix as a shared outcomes tool.

#### **Highlights of Strategies' work with FRC networks include:**

- Participating as associate members in the Ventura County Partnership for Safe Families, the Santa Cruz Family Resource Network and the Kern County Network for Children.
- Regularly attending and monitoring the progress of a variety of Los Angeles County networks including all eight of the Service Planning Areas (SPAs) Councils, the Children's Planning Council, the Los Angeles County Healthy Start/FRC Network, and the Family Resource Center Network of Los Angeles County (FRCNLAC).
- Providing significant support to the newly formed Family Resource Network of Ventura County during monthly meetings and in the development of a county-wide Family Resource Day.
- Regularly attending network meetings and providing support to a variety of San Diego County networks including San Diego Healthy Start Network, San Diego Family Support Network, San Diego FRCN, San Diego Child Abuse Prevention Committee, and the South Bay Partnership and Chula Vista Collaborative.
- Built relationships with and regularly attends network meetings to the five known FRC networks in San Bernardino County and the three known networks in Riverside County.
- Facilitating the annual retreat/strategic planning sessions for the Santa Cruz Family Resource network and the Ventura County Partnership for Safe Families and Communities.
  - Working closely with the Imperial County FRC network to develop individualized capacity building for their members, such as support of the incoming El Centro FRC coordinator and program planning for network FRCs.
  - Participating in conference planning and design of the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual National Latino Fatherhood Conference and the Males as Positive Forces Awards of the Chula Vista Community Collaborative.
  - Developing specialized capacity building plans with a variety of networks including:
    - FRC network (FACT) in Orange County.
    - San Francisco Family Support Network.
    - Kern County Network for Children.
    - Project Access in Los Angeles, Orange and Ventura counties.

#### **Future Directions**

Strategies continues to utilize these networking approaches in FFY 2008 and will further integrate the approaches into two particular initiatives: the Family Development Matrix and the High Performing Partnerships.

#### **Activities/Results**

The most important outreach that Strategies has employed has been its ongoing relationship-building that has taken place at training events, in networking meetings, through phone calls and through site visits. The positive relationships developed through these activities have proven vital to the success of all aspects of Strategies' service delivery.

Additionally, distance learning (teleconferences and web-conferencing) has been used to reach the diverse (urban, suburban, and rural) communities in the state, as well as those individuals unable to travel to a given site for training.

Standard surface mailing of project information and training flyers continued to be an effective outreach method. The statewide mailing list was continually updated to eliminate outdated information, thus lowering mailing costs and reducing duplication. The statewide mailing list currently has in excess of 7,000 entries.

California Family Resource Association (CFRA): CFRA contributes an article to each quarterly Strategies newsletter. The articles focus on areas of policy development and policy implementation that impact the field of family strengthening.

## **Future Directions**

Strategies will continue to utilize outreach approaches that have proven successful: building relationships through network development, attending conferences/meetings, facilitating meetings/gatherings, as well as providing training and technical assistance. Additionally, Strategies will assist with the upcoming 2008 CFRA Statewide Conference by participating on the conference planning committee, advertise the conference through its listserv and newsletters, assist with the facilitation of several workshops, as well as with conference registration.

## **PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AREA 10:**

### **Special Start Training Program (SSTP)**

#### **Program Description**

The CDSS continues to utilize CAPTA funds for the SSTP, which provides training to medical professionals, social workers, professionals from other disciplines, and foster and adoptive parents on assessment and developmental interventions for high-risk newborns who are discharged from intensive care nurseries. The primary objective of this program is to facilitate enhanced parent/infant interactions and promote the development and recovery of these medically fragile infants in the NICU. In learning to differentiate between what is stable behavior from what is stressful for the infant, parents are able to help their infant work towards organized behavioral patterns that support their medical recovery and development. The training is strength-based. Each training day is taught by a professional trainer, and a parent trainer who had an infant in the NICU. The core training program is called Family Infant Relationship Support Training (FIRST). [www.mills.edu/specialstart/program.html](http://www.mills.edu/specialstart/program.html)

#### **Objectives**

- To provide core training for foster parents, relative caregivers, social workers and other professionals, including psychologists, physical, speech and occupational therapists, public health nurses, early childhood educators, marriage and family therapists and home



visitors in the assessment and planning of appropriate interventions to meet the needs of medically fragile infants.

- To ensure the curriculum meets the certification standards for FIRST (Browne, et al, 1995), based on the methodology of the Newborn Individualized Development Care and Assessment Program (NIDCAP, Als, 1985).
- To increase and broaden the audience of professionals requesting training statewide in California.

## **Activities/Results**

In FFY 2007, 704 people throughout California attended different aspects of the training (Day One, Day Two, Day Three, Birth to Three (aka Pre-to-Three), and one-on-one guidance). The primary model for training is the FIRST program. Additionally, from October through December 2007, 114 people attended Special Start trainings; as well as from January 2008 through March 2008, an additional 120 people attended the training workshops (Day One, Day Two, and one-on-one guidance).

For the period of October 1, 2006 through September 30, 2007 the training workshops and one-on-one guidance included: "Special Start" Day One - Introduction (eight workshops), and "Pre-to-Three" trainings (two workshops), Day Two - Practicum (three workshops), Day Three – Mentoring (one workshop). One-on-one guidance was given on an on-going basis throughout the year, which included observation and intervention with foster parents and caregivers. A workshop entitled "Update on Medical Issues of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit" as given to graduate students at Mills College.

From October 2007 through March 2008, there were three Day One workshops, and on-going guidance to trainees. During this time, staff developed and presented at a conference related to NICU infants. Most recently, the Co-Director presented three workshops at an Annual International Conference on "Developmental Interventions in Neonatal Care" (November 12-15, 2007).

The SSTP program included training foster parents and biological parents to prepare for the transition of medically fragile infants from one caregiver to another. The training instructed foster parents on engagement techniques with biological parents to promote individualized caregiver interactions and support foster infant care during and after the transition period. Professionals, including nurses, teachers, and social workers attended a variety of the "Special Start" trainings, specifically Day One (Introduction), Day Two (Practicum), and a Day Three (Mentoring Day).

On an on-going basis, SSTP will continue to offer the Day One Workshop Introduction and Overview (eight hours); the Day Two Practicum workshop (eight hours); individual practice and mentoring sessions (based on FIRST); the advanced practicum (four hour workshop); continuing education days; and training trainers in a manner that meets certification requirements.

SSTP materials are developed, revised and updated as required, includes digital video training tapes of premature infant behavior, SSTP brochures and other hard copy material. Project staff utilizes the website to provide current resources/links regarding the

condition/care of medically fragile infants on an on-going basis. Staff developed the booklet, "Getting to Know Your Baby" for caregivers and parents. It is available on the SSTP website to review and download. The companion book for caregivers/parents "Supporting Your Infant after the Neonatal Intensive Care Nursery Experience" has been written in draft form, with pictures in the process of being added. It focuses on developmental information for parents after the infant has been in the NICU.

The SSTP website provides information that describes the training program, training resources in both English and Spanish, and permits online training registration. Future plans in process, but not currently contracted, are to have the website expanded to provide training using the internet. This will enable training of a much larger audience.

Currently, the Special Start contract is in the process of being transitioned from Mills College to the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF).

The CDSS/OCAP has charged this activity to CAPTA, but will explore the possibility of capturing this under Title IV-E training activities. We will secure the required information to document who attends the training provided and the number of hours of training provided.

## **PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AREA 12: PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, SERVICES, AND TRAINING**

### **California Center on Parent Involvement**

In July 2007, the CDSS/OCAP and Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc. began collaborating on a joint project to develop and maintain a California Center on Parent Involvement. The purpose of the Center is to assist the state in moving toward the use of evidence-based/evidence informed efforts that include meaningful involvement of parents in direct services, trainings, public awareness, education, policy and systems change. The Center will develop a statewide database with various resources on parent involvement programs and practices (e.g. research articles, publications, web-based tools) for California communities to improve outcomes for children and families.

As part of this effort, we have established a diverse State Advisory Committee that provides overall guidance on the work of the Center. The Committee includes state, county and regional representatives from child welfare, mental health, health, child abuse prevention, the tribal community, FRCs, parent leaders, CBOs, foundations, and other key stakeholders. The Committee is focusing on:

- Providing input on the content of an online survey instrument that will be utilized to gain vital information on currently existing Parent Involvement Programs statewide.
- Providing input on cataloguing different Parent Involvement Programs entered into the database.
- Promoting awareness of the Center resources and highlighting the effectiveness of existing California Parent Involvement Programs with other statewide departments, initiatives, counties, etc.
- Developing standards of practice for parent involvement programs.

The state Advisory Committee met this year to: (1) develop a purpose statement with principles and values for the California Center on Parent Involvement; (2) develop a logic model to help reach a common understanding of activities and intended outcomes; and (3) provide input on the survey tool that will be used to gather information on existing Parent Involvement Programs statewide.

The Advisory Committee discussed some of the important benefits and outcomes from this innovative project including:

- Establishment of baseline data on parent involvement programs and practices in California;
- California communities will become aware of parent involvement programs and practices;
- California communities will increase utilization of parent involvement resources;
- California communities will improve evaluation of parent involvement practices;
- California communities and parents will increase their knowledge, skills and abilities on parent involvement practices and strategies;
- California communities will incorporate the values and principles of parent involvement;
- Reduction/prevention of child abuse and neglect; and
- Safety, well-being, permanency for children and youth.

As this work continues, CDSS/OCAP also look at other outcomes such as whether parent involvement and the results from the California Center activities are linked to (1) building stronger partnerships between parents, agencies and organizations; (2) changes in values and attitudes relating to parent involvement; and (3) increased utilization of parents as resources.

### **Parent Involvement**

<http://www.parentsanonymous.org/pahtml/paAbout.html>

Since 1999, Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc. has been partnering with CDSS to provide parent leadership training and technical assistance to child abuse prevention agencies across the state to encourage and support shared leadership. Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc.'s, grant objectives include:

- Establish a state advisory committee to guide the work of the California Center.
- Build successful partnerships between Parent Leaders and professionals by supporting California State Parent Team members in working with the CDSS on various committees and task forces.
- Develop plan to implement recommendations from Wraparound Summit on Parent Partner Surveys with state Work Group.

The overall goal of the grant is to foster a collaborative relationship in local communities where parents and professionals can work together to ensure quality services for children and families. This grant is funded through June 30, 2009.

### **California State Parent Team (CSPT)**

Given the commitment to ensure that the “parent voice” is utilized in shaping the direction of family support programs, services and policies throughout California, the CDSS/OCAP has established a California State Parent Team (CSPT). The CSPT is composed of eight diverse parents with strong leadership skills and expertise who work collaboratively with professionals to improve the child abuse prevention services and systems throughout California.

CDSS/OCAP is contracting with Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc. to recruit members and provide training, technical assistance, mentoring, coaching and support to the CSPT to effectively carry out their important roles. The mission of the CSPT is to collaborate with CDSS/OCAP in developing the state’s capacity to establish a highly qualified and trained pool of active and diverse parents with leadership skills and expertise to represent the “parent voice.” They will also share responsibility with professionals and policymakers in planning, implementation and evaluation of policy and program decisions to improve program performance in family support and child welfare services.

Each CSPT member receives a comprehensive handbook that outlines the CSPT roles, responsibilities and operating procedures. Some of the recent activities the Team has been involved in include:

- Reviewing and providing feedback and recommendations on the California’s 2008 CBCAP grant application.
- Child and Family Services Review site visits.
- Serving on the state Advisory Committee for the California Center on Parent Involvement.
- Participating in Child Abuse Prevention Month activities.
- Participating at the Statewide Child Abuse Prevention Summit.
- Planning for the annual statewide Parent Leadership Conference.

CDSS/OCAP is strongly committed to working with the CSPT members to support increased involvement of parents in meaningful leadership roles; serving in an advisory capacity, as resource to agency administrators and policymakers at the statewide level to help shape the direction of family support and child welfare services.

### **California Coalition for Child Abuse Prevention (CAPC)**

CAPC provides a vehicle for coordination and improvement of services and increasing the public’s awareness and commitment to the prevention of child abuse. CAPC are uniquely positioned to assist OCAP fulfill its responsibility for directing, leading, and evaluating the network of public-private partnerships and the continuum of preventive services for children and families in their region.

The Regional Coordinators will continue to utilize the Friends website and resources and to become familiar with the logic model as we plan to provide Friends, “Train the Trainer” on the logic model.

The California Coalition for Child Abuse Prevention will be responsible for coordinating and supporting local CAPCs within their region in order to achieve the following goals:

**Goal 1: Develop, expand, and sustain a prevention network to coordinate child abuse prevention efforts regionally and locally.**

**Objective1:** To build or enhance the infrastructure of the regional coalitions to include representative membership reflecting the diverse prevention network within the region, including parents.

**Objective2:** To provide a regional forum for interagency cooperation and coordination of child abuse prevention efforts.

**Objective3:** To provide a central point for communication and dissemination of information.

**Objective 4:** To provide coordination, technical assistance, and support for evolving and existing CAPCs within the region.

**Goal 2: Provide public/community awareness and education about child abuse prevention.**

**Objective 1:** To promote public awareness of the abuse and neglect of children and the resources available for prevention, intervention and treatment.

**Objective 2:** To encourage and facilitate community support for child abuse and neglect programs.

**Objective 3:** To encourage and facilitate training in the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

**Objective 4:** To coordinate regional training and technical assistance resources.

**Goal 3: Evaluate the effectiveness of the prevention networks regionally and locally and adapt to changing needs.**

**Objective 1:** To assist OCAP in the development and implementation of evaluation tools that asses regional and local prevention networks.

**Objective 2:** To assist OCAP in the development and implementation of a peer review process that supports the effectiveness of local CAPCs.

**Objective 3:** To identify gaps in services to children and families and make recommendations for strategies for filling gaps.

**Wraparound Parent Partner Project**

The CDSS/CPFBSB has continued to be committed to strengthening the role and support of parent partners in our statewide Wraparound Programs. CDSS collaborated with Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc. on a joint project to identify needs and supports for parent partners in statewide Wraparound Programs from July 2006 through June 2007. Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc. established a 19-member Wraparound Work Group, including parent partners, Wraparound management and program staff, National Wraparound Initiative representatives, and CDSS staff to assist with all tasks related to this important project. The following was accomplished during the past fiscal year:

- **Developed and Administered Parent Partner Survey Tools:** Online Survey Tools were developed to gather information on the Parent Partner role, training needs and supports from Wraparound County Coordinator/Administrators, Program Staff and Parent Partners. The surveys were posted on the Parents Anonymous® Inc. web site from January 1, 2007 through February 28, 2007.
- **Analyzed Survey Results and Developed Report:** A total of 211 surveys were completed. Parents Anonymous® Inc. staff compiled the results of the surveys and developed a written report on the findings. This report can be viewed on the Parents Anonymous® Inc website at:  
<http://panetwork.parentsanonymous.org/asp/a91/SurveyFindings.pdf>
- **Conducted Wraparound Summit:** A one-day Summit was held on June 5, 2007, to review the survey results with SB 163 Wraparound Program representatives and seek further input and recommendations.

Many innovative ideas were recommended through the surveys and input received at the Summit. During SFY 2007/08, CDSS decided to move forward with two key recommendations to strengthen the critical role of Parent Partners within California Wraparound Programs. These recommendations were to: (1) establish an Outcomes Work Group that would design a fidelity tool to measure core competencies of the Parent Partner role in relationship to the Wraparound model; and (2) establish a Training Work Group that would focus on collecting information on Training Curricula for Parent Partners. These two Work Groups have been meeting monthly via teleconferences to move forward in carrying out their work plans.

**Outcomes Work Group** - This work group has been developing documentation to define the role and clarify the activities of the Parent Partner. They have utilized two key documents developed by the National Wraparound Initiative-Ten Principles of Wraparound and Wraparound Phases and Activities. In February 2008, the work group completed a draft of a Role Description for the Parent Partner. This new Role Description delineates the needed skills of a Parent Partner to successfully carry out their responsibilities. Once this Role Description is finalized and approved by CDSS, the work group will begin developing a fidelity tool that will measure a Parent Partner's adherence to 4 or 5 core competencies. The work group is also planning to look at what outcomes to measure (e.g. child and family outcomes, mental health outcomes, critical incident outcomes) and then make recommendations on existing tools that may be used. Plans are present the work group products and recommendations at the 5<sup>th</sup> Statewide Wraparound Institute in California scheduled in June 2008.

**Training Work Group** – This work group has been focusing on gathering information on training curricula for Parent Partners currently being used by Wraparound Programs in California counties. A standardized tool was developed to help work group members gather this information from each county. Once this information is gathered, the work group plans to develop recommended training standards for Parent Partners based on the knowledge and skills needed to effectively carry out their roles. The work group will utilize the skill sets identified in the role description developed by the Outcomes Work Group to develop the training standards. They will also look at other resources such as the two newest National

Wraparound Initiative draft documents, Phases and Activities of the Wraparound Process: What the Family Partner Contributes and The Application of the Ten Principles of the Wraparound Process to the Role of Family Partners on Wraparound Teams. This work group will also make a presentation at the 5<sup>th</sup> statewide Wraparound Institute.

- The Governor proclaimed February 2008 as California Parent Leadership Month.
- A member of the California State Parent Team attended the California Child Abuse Prevention Summit and had the opportunity to network and share California Parent Leadership experiences with other state and county representatives.
- The Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc. has enhanced collaboration and communication between Parent Leaders and Child Abuse Prevention councils throughout the state.

Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc. continues to provide evaluation information and will be submitting a proposal seeking continued OCAP funding into SFY 2008-09.

### **Parent Leadership Conference**

In addition to meeting federal funding requirements, the OCAP recognizes the importance of parent engagement in child welfare services. It is critical for consumers of these services to have roles in the planning, implementation and evaluation of programs and policy decisions aimed at the prevention of child abuse and neglect. The purpose of the "Parent Leadership Conference" is to conduct a one-day conference with focus on engaging parents into advisory groups, governance structures, decision-making bodies and leadership roles.

The goals of Parent Leadership Conference are to:

- Raise public awareness about the important roles parents play in shaping the lives of children and families.
- Expand opportunities for parents to participate in meaningful leadership activities.
- Recognize individual parents whose contributions make a positive difference to their families and communities.
- Build successful partnerships between parents and professionals to strengthen and support families and communities.

The CDSS/OCAP is planning its second annual Parent Leadership Conference which will be held in Sacramento in November 2008 to continue to increase parent partnerships with child welfare services at the state level and in all 58 California counties.

## **PROGRAM AREA 14: PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, SERVICES AND TRAINING**

### **Evidenced-based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare Services in California**

<http://www.cachildwelfareclearinghouse.org>

#### **Program Description**

The California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare (CEBC) is one of the CDSS' targeted efforts to improve the lives of children and families served within the CWS. The CDSS contracted with Rady Children's Hospital-Chadwick Center for Children and Families

to create the CEBC. Children's Hospital, San Diego was awarded the grant on June 1, 2004, which ended on June 30, 2007. A new contract extends the project through June 20, 2010.

Development of the CEBC was accomplished through a participatory process involving an advisory committee (AC) and a scientific panel. The AC includes researchers, child welfare services practitioners, as well as representatives from the CWDA, the CDSS, community agencies, and foundations. The National Scientific Panel is comprised of five core members who are nationally recognized as leaders in child welfare research and practice, and who are knowledgeable about what constitutes best practice/evidence-based practice.

The CEBC website is designed to:

- Serve as an online connection for child welfare professionals, staff of public and private organizations, academic institutions, and others who are committed to serving children and families.
- Provide up-to-date information on evidence-based child welfare practices.
- Facilitate the utilization of evidence-based practices as a method of achieving improved outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being for children and families involved in the California public CWS.

## **Objectives**

Develop formal criteria for selection of practices as evidence-based and review a wide variety of sources to identify practices meeting the criteria.

To design a conceptual framework for an interactive web-based application of the Clearinghouse that supports access to and implementation of evidence-based practices in the field of Social Work.

## **Activities/Results**

The Clearinghouse uses a standardized process to identify and review child welfare programs and practices for inclusion on the website. The statewide AC selects an average of 10-12 topical areas per year. The Clearinghouse staff works closely with the Scientific Panel to identify the need for additional topical area expertise, which will be provided by leading child welfare authorities. Working with the Scientific Panel and topical experts, the Clearinghouse staff elicits "nominations" for inclusion in the Clearinghouse. These generally involve programs or models selected which fit one of the following criteria:

- Have strong empirical support for their efficacy.
- Is in common use in California.
- Are being marketed in California.

The AC selects five to ten of the most compelling programs and models that can be effectively reviewed and rated for the list of programs and models nominated each SFY.

The Clearinghouse staff work with the topical expert and with the developer of the program or model to identify all relevant program/model related literature. The Clearinghouse staff examines all peer-reviewed research literature on the program/model along with a sample of



proprietary and other relevant peer-reviewed clinical literature. The information from the reviews and the developers are synthesized to create the topical outline contained on this website. The Clearinghouse staff and topical experts review the research and science supporting the model and “rate” the model based on the strength of the evidence supporting it using a scientific rating scale. They determine the research and particular program’s/model’s relevance to child welfare outcomes based on the three fundamental goals: safety, permanency and well-being.

## **Activities/Results**

The website, <http://www.cachildwelfareclearinghouse.org>, became operational in the spring of 2006. Changes continue to be made to improve the look and function of the site.

The CEBC website statistics for SFY 2007-2008 are as follows:

- 57,456 visitors counted.
- 14% of the total visitors were from over 146 countries.
- 84% were from the United States.
- 31% were from 477 California cities.

During SFY 2007-2008, seventy-seven (77) programs were reviewed and rated in eleven (11) topical areas.

## **Objectives**

Develop a formal process for the implementation and maintenance of the CEBC.

## **Activities**

The CEBC is collaborating with CALSWEC and the RTAs to provide eight, six-hour trainings throughout the state this SFY. In January of 2008, CEBC participated in a collaborative discussion with ACYF, Children’s Bureau, Child Welfare Gateway, FRIENDS, CBCAP, and others regarding Scientifically Rating Prevention Programs.

The CEBC conducted the annual face-to-face meeting with the Scientific Panel in January of 2008. The bi-annual meeting of the AC was held in February of 2008.

The CEBC continues to add topics and Programs. During SFY 2007/08, seventy-seven (77) programs were reviewed and rated in eleven (11) topical areas.

## **Future Direction**

CEBC staff are currently working to review, rate and post the following topical areas: Home Visitation, Interventions for Neglect, Higher Level of Placement, and Child Welfare Initiatives.

Arrangements are underway for lectures/workshops on selected evidence based practices for the 2009 International Child and Family Maltreatment Conference.

## **Family Development Matrix**

### **Program Description**

The Family Development Matrix (FDM) is a thirty-six (36) month family outcomes project specifically designed to provide technical assistance and training necessary for the outcomes orientation, indicator design and testing, family assessment protocols, family involvement in case planning, and procedures for the collection and analysis of data into an integrated outcomes tool. In addition, the project includes mutual collaboration with the Pathway Mapping Initiative (PMI) at Harvard University and their efforts to research and develop information and a technical assistance plan for a pathway to children in safe, stable, nurturing homes. The Pathway includes best practices, indicators of progress, benchmarks, and processes for change.

### **Objectives**

- To build capacity within the FRC and family support programs to use an integrated family outcomes tool, for program assessment and strategic planning for quality improvement and sustainability.
- To support FRCs in partnering with local CWS to use the FDM as a tool for developing shared target outcomes for families in which family support services have been indicated as the appropriate Differential Response, as well as to facilitate usage of the outcome data to improve services to families.
- To conduct program evaluation and provide a framework of information for a pathway to prevent child abuse and to keep children in stable and nurturing homes.

### **Activities/Results**

Communications among partners has been upgraded into a working partnership- building capacity for future collaborations.

Assessment has been upgraded into an outcome informed practice with over 800 at-risk families. Families are guided to create empowerment goals, with resource and support roles for family workers developing interventions to reduce the potential of child abuse and neglect.

Forty-seven (47) resource centers and thirteen (13) county welfare partners have created partnerships to share common outcomes to prevent child abuse and neglect. The counties include: Butte, Del Norte, Lake, Madera, Placer, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Solano, Tehama, Ventura, and Yolo.

Increased FRC accountability and data analysis capability through the use of county wide protocols and a web based data system.

Process with each partnership includes selection and testing of core indicators, common protocols for data collection, and training for a total of 378 family workers to use the Family Development Matrix with families in assessment, case planning, and outcomes evaluation.

County collaborative have translated their Family Development Matrix into at least six (6) languages; Spanish, Tagalog, Hmong, Chinese, Vietnamese and Russian. The Institute for Community Collaborative Studies has adapted the Matrix Creator to use languages as well as English for data entry and case planning.

Client families have had participatory roles to help establish FDM validity and design congruence. Agency staff is trained to use the FDM with the family to hear their story, identify strengths and areas of concern, and use the FDM data to establish family-directed case plans for interventions.

A new set of Spiritual realm outcome indicators developed collaboratively with the OCAP provides needed individual and family measures that can be used by cohorts and faith based programs.

The Pathway to the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect is the result of a collaborative effort by Harvard University PMI, the Institute of Collaborative Studies of California State University, Monterey Bay and the CDSS/OCAP which was made public in December 2007.

As a result of discussions early this year, activities have been planned which include a conference in Monterey which showcased the Pathway (June 10-11, 2008), developing a core set of outcome indicators to track local prevention program progress, creating an interactive website for action planning, and training the thirteen (13) counties collaborative to use the Pathway for child welfare prevention plans.

## **Safely Surrendered Babies**

### **Program Description**

This effort provides public awareness of the state law regarding abandonment of newborn babies. The Safely Surrendered Baby (SSB) Law allows a responsible party to confidentially surrender a baby to a hospital and, in designated counties, fire stations. A parent who is unable or unwilling to care for an infant can legally and confidentially surrender their baby within three days of birth, so long as there is no evidence of abuse or neglect. The goal of the SSB program is to prevent injury or death to newborns that may have been abandoned under unsafe conditions.

### **Objective**

To provide public awareness through education and outreach by providing and disseminating materials that educates the general public about the state law.

### **Activities/Results**

In the ongoing effort to increase public awareness the CDSS/OCAP continues to provide public outreach materials. The new public education materials include posters and brochures that are available in both English and Spanish at no cost. To enable counties and public

agencies to personalize the brochures, space on the back allows for the insertion of local information, e.g. toll-free telephone number or contact information.

Safely Surrendered Baby public education materials have continued to be distributed throughout the state to a wide variety of local public and private agencies that serve children and families. The types of agencies that receive the SSB materials are:

- Local health departments, hospitals and other health care organizations (e.g., the California Health Care Association).
- Community-based service organizations (e.g., FRCs).
- Law enforcement (e.g., district attorneys, police departments, sheriff's departments, and probation offices).
- Public agencies, private organizations, and policy/decision makers from local government.
- State Departments (e.g., Education and Health Services).
- Community Institutions (e.g., schools, colleges and universities).

### **Specific CDSS Activities**

The CDSS also continues to promote the SSB media campaign. As a result of the recent audit of the SSB law by the California Bureau of State Audits (April 2007), a workgroup will be convened to include statewide and local stakeholders to improve outreach efforts. The CDSS has completed new, updated pamphlets and posters, in English and Spanish, and is now exploring the possibility of a toll free hotline number.

As of December 2007, 220 newborns have been safely surrendered in California while another 147 infants have been found alive following their illegal abandonment.

### **Parent Outreach Project**

The contract ended June 30, 2007. This project not currently funded.

### **Supporting Father Involvement Study (SFI)**

#### **Program Description**

During SFY 2002/03, CDSS/OCAP designed, developed, and implemented a five-site study of an intervention intended to improve the quality and level of positive father involvement in at-risk families. The intervention is now being implemented in Santa Cruz, San Luis Obispo, Tulare, and Yuba Counties. Grantees are the CWS agencies in these counties, which are required to partner with a local family resource center for implementation.

Initially, Sacramento County participated in the study as the fifth site. The county site experienced difficulty identifying and engaging target population families, and it was decided that the intervention was not a good fit for the identified community. The CDSS/OCAP and Sacramento County mutually reached an agreement that allowed the County to end its participation in the study and to provide alternate services to fathers who reside in the neighborhood of the FRC. During SFY 2006/07, CDSS/OCAP entered into contract with Contra Costa County to host an SFI site located in Richmond, California. This site primarily

works with African-American families. The SFI intervention is now being implemented in Santa Cruz, San Luis Obispo, Tulare, Yuba, and Contra Costa counties.

The CDSS/OCAP entered into an Interagency Agreement with the University of California, Berkeley (UC Berkeley) to conduct the SFI study to:

- Determine the effectiveness of a particular intervention to increase positive father involvement.
- Measure organizational culture change to determine whether the family resource center implementing the intervention becomes more inclusive of fathers in other programs and services.

The target population is co-parenting couples with children age seven and younger. Families are randomly assigned to one of three of the following groups:

- A one-time educational presentation about how positive father involvement improves outcomes for children.
- A 16-week (2 hours per week) group meeting for fathers.
- A 16-week group for couples (2 hours per week). All project participants receive case management services.

Data are being collected through a battery of assessments that are administered three times during each family's participation in the study. It is anticipated that a final report will be prepared at the end of 2009.

### **Activities/Results**

The principal investigators were retained through contracts with the Connecticut Department of Mental Health (to retain investigators from Yale University Medical School) and with UC Berkeley. Project meetings to provide face-to-face training and technical assistance to staff of the five sites, were held in May and October 2007 and January 2008. A project listserv that facilitates communication, training, and technical assistance was launched in 2004 and continues to provide continuity in communication between sites, the research team and CDSS. Additionally, twice monthly, separate teleconferences are held for group leaders, case managers, data coordinators, and the California Team, consisting of the researchers, principal investigators and staff from the CDSS/OCAP. The study sites (five family resource centers) have enrolled families into the study and are providing intervention services. As of May 2008, a total of 1,084 families are eligible for the study.

The design of the SFI study involves random assignment to:

- A single informational session (the control group).
- A 16-week fathers-only group.
- A 16-week couple's group.

The same staff pairs (each pair comprised of a male and female) conduct interventions with all study participants. The first half of the expected 300 participants has completed a pre-

intervention assessment and a post-intervention assessment three months after the groups ended.

Analyses of changes in the full sample assessed at baseline and again three months after the intervention showed that a single meeting focused on father involvement (the control condition) produced, on the average no significant positive changes and allowed some significant negative changes to occur in the fathers and mothers who participated.

By contrast, the father's groups and the couple's groups produced a number of positive effects on the participants as individuals, on their couple's relationship and on their relationships with their children. Participants of the ongoing groups reported fewer symptoms of anxiety and depression at the post-test assessment than they had before the intervention began. They maintained their satisfaction with their relationships as couples, in contrast with control couples whose couple relationship satisfaction declined. Fathers in both the father's groups and couple's groups showed significant increases in their hands-on involvement in the daily tasks of child care. Finally, participants in both ongoing interventions experienced a significant rise in annual income, in comparison with control participants whose incomes remained stable. In some areas of functioning, the couple's group participants showed greater gains than the father's group participants (larger declines in parenting stress and larger increases in father involvement).

Preliminary analyses of the third assessment, 18 months after the couples entered the study, 9 months after the first post-test, reveal that intervention gains are being maintained over time, and that the father's group participants appear to be "catching up" to the couple's group participants in terms of the positive effect of the intervention.

In short, the results, especially for the groups in which both mothers and fathers participate together, appear promising—in terms of fostering increased father involvement in their young children's care and parents' satisfaction with their relationships as couples, and the parents' ratings of their young children's aggressive behavior.

## **Objective**

To proceed as planned with San Luis Obispo, Santa Cruz, Tulare, and Yuba Counties in Phase II of the Supporting Father Involvement Project, which involves recruiting additional families and bringing the results of Phase I to staff in other agencies in each of the four counties.

## **Activities/Results**

CDSS/OCAP is in the process of expanding the study to new target populations. A dissemination plan developed in 2006 provided practice information for presentation to other agencies in the counties of the four original sites. As of May 2008, each of the four original sites hosted a one-half day dissemination activity. Activities are underway to use these initial experiences as foundation to roll out the results of the study to agencies to additional agencies.

CDSS/OCAP, along with the Stuart Foundation, provided funding to Strategies Region 2 for the statewide dissemination of results beyond the five current counties. Two, one half day presentations will be presented in Southern California by July 2008. The joint funding included money for the hiring of a Dissemination Project Manager, which was accomplished during the early part of FFY 2007/08.

## **Objective**

Develop and deliver an effective training and technical assistance program to the five implementing sites with special emphasis on better equipping the Contra Costa County site with developing a plan to recruit and enroll more African American fathers and their families. The families at the other four sites are predominantly Latino and Caucasian.

## **Activities/Results**

During SFY 2007/08, training and technical assistance to the five sites currently implementing the SFI study continued. Project staff, along with the county liaison from each of the five counties, were convened for training on May and October 2007 and January 2008. Training focused specifically on:

- Model fidelity.
- Data collection and reporting.
- Project oversight and sustainability development.
- Clinical skills/group intervention approaches.
- Case management strategies.
- Activities to disseminate the results of Phase I to other agencies in the counties hosting the four original sites.

The research team is comprised of Carolyn Cowan, Ph.D., Phil Cowan, Ph.D., CO-PIs, and Jessie Wong, Data Manager, all from UC Berkeley. Kyle Pruett, M.D. and Marsha Kline Pruett, Ph.D., of Yale University, provided the staff training. In addition, monthly clinical consultations are provided via conference calls for key staff from each site and site visits are conducted as necessary by the Cowans, the Pruetts, or Ms. Wong, to provide additional technical assistance.

A listserv is maintained by Strategies, another CDSS/OCAP funded program, to provide ongoing communication among the sites, the research team, data manager, and CDSS/OCAP staff, as well as to facilitate peer support for the four SFI study sites.

CAPIT and CAPTA funds are being utilized to fund the intervention.

## **Significant Accomplishments**

The principal investigators were retained through contracts with the Connecticut Department of Mental Health (to retain investigators from Yale University Medical School) and with University of California, Berkeley. Project meetings, to provide face-to-face training and technical assistance to staff of the five sites, were held in May and October 2007 and January

2008. A project listserv that facilitates communication, training and technical assistance was launched in 2004 and continues to provide continuity in communication between sites, research team and CDSS. Twice monthly, separate teleconferences are held for group leaders, case managers, data coordinators, and the Response Coordinators Group (CA Team) which is composed of the principle investigators, the researchers and staff from OCAP. To insure the collaboration and coordination of dissemination efforts, the Strategies SFI staff members participate on CA Team teleconferences.

All five sites have enrolled families into the study and are providing intervention services. As of May 2008, 1,084 families have been found eligible to participate in this study.

The design of the SFI study for low-income families involves random assignment to:

- A single-session information session (the control group).
- A 16-week fathers-only group.
- A 16-week couple's group.

The same male-female staff pairs conduct interventions with all study participants. The 289 participants have completed a pre-intervention assessment, a post-intervention assessment 3 months after the groups end, and some have completed a third assessment 18 months after entering the study. Analyses of changes in the full sample assessed at baseline and again three months after the intervention showed that a single meeting focused on father involvement (the control condition) produced, on the average no significant positive changes, and allowed some significant negative changes to occur in the fathers and mothers who participated. By contrast, the father's groups and the couple's groups produced a number of positive effects on the participants as individuals, on their couple relationship, and on their relationships with their children. Participants in the ongoing groups reported fewer symptoms of anxiety and depression at the post-test assessment than they had before the intervention began. They maintained their satisfaction with their relationships as couples, in contrast with control couples whose couple relationship satisfaction declined. Fathers in both the father's groups and couple's groups showed significant increases in their hands-on involvement in the daily tasks of child care. Finally, participants in both ongoing interventions experienced a significant rise in annual income, in comparison with control participants whose incomes remained stable. In some areas of functioning, the couple's group participants showed greater gains than the father's group participants (larger declines in parenting stress and larger increases in father involvement).

Preliminary analyses of the third assessment, 18 months after the couples entered the study, 9 months after the first post-test, reveal that intervention gains are being maintained over time, and that the father's group participants appear to be "catching up" to the couple's group participants in terms of the positive effect of the intervention.

In short, the results, especially for the groups in which both mothers and fathers participate regularly, appear promising - in terms of fostering increased father involvement in their young children's care and parents' satisfaction with their relationships as couples, and the parents' ratings of their young children's aggressive behavior.



## **Barriers/Unexpected Events**

In March 2007, CDSS and Contra Costa County reached an agreement that allowed the county to initiate participation in the study through the North Richmond Family Service Center, which predominantly serves African American families. The first year (March 07-March 08) proved to be very challenging as the staff faced many barriers: three different Project Directors, experiencing vandalizing of the office buildings, being relocated to the county child welfare building during renovations and returned to the original site location, in the midst of gang violence, etc. During these challenges, the staff consistently provided services to the families. Their first two groups began during the middle of March 2008.

## **Future Plans**

By the end of FFY 2007/08, the group leaders and Strategies will have developed the first training of trainers curriculum to be used in teaching new agencies how to run father's and couple's groups.

During SFY 2008/09, the Strategies and site Group Leaders will have completed the development of a two-day training of trainers guide to be used when training other agencies' staff how to implement the SFI model. The four original sites will move forward to host other dissemination activities on the local level and to mentor sites of at least three agencies, within their respective counties, in implementing the SFI program. Because of the newness of the Contra Costa County site, they will focus on recruiting for groups and not be involved in dissemination activities, at this time.

CDSS/OCAP has made the decision to fund SFI for the period of 2009-12 to include families with more complicated issues, such as drug abuse, domestic violence, etc.

Additionally, Strategies will work with the Fenton Communication Group regarding Fenton's development of a media campaign to disseminate SFI information to the general public within California.

## **CalWORKS Child-Only Study**

The Child-Only Study is designed to guide future program and policy development. This study examines CalWORKs Family Assistance Grants that are calculated to support the dependent child(ren) in a family; not adults. According to the U.S. DHHS, "Over one-half of California CalWORKs cases are now Child-Only families and are identified as living under extreme poverty conditions." Child-Only cases impose sanctions on unaided parents or caregivers who no longer have work requirements or receive welfare-to-work resources—including child care, behavioral health or transportation subsidies. The Child-Only Study is funded in three phases, each financially different.

Phase I of the study was financially supported by the Child-Only Study counties of Alameda, Humboldt, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Sonoma, and Stanislaus by contracting with Speigman Norris Associates (SNA). The Principal Investigator is Richard Speigman who analyzed county administrative data and different groups of Child-Only cases, as well as the family members comprising these groups. Additional resources and funding was

provided by the San Francisco Foundation, the Stuart Foundation, and the East Bay Community Foundation. All Phase I findings will be compared with families that are receiving CalWORKs grants who are not Child-Only cases.

Phase II of the study was funded by local county assistance, continuing the research of Richard Speigman of Speigman Norris Associates. Participating counties included San Mateo, Stanislaus, Alameda, San Francisco, and Santa Clara. This phase of the Child-Only study examined a subset of child-only cases and described the resources and needs of these families. This information contributes towards understanding the ability of parents as caregivers to move off CalWORKs cash assistance, while providing on-going care for their children. This phase of the study looked at barriers to employment that parents and caregivers of Child-Only cases have and seeks to promote systems change at the policy and program levels.

Phase III of the Child-Only Study is being funded by a 12-month \$200,000 CAPTA grant awarded by the CDSS/OCAP. This phase began July 1, 2007 and ended June 30, 2008. It seeks to assess the status and specific needs of children in CalWORKs Child-Only cases. Phase III of the CalWORKs Child-Only Study will provide information about the growing population of CalWORKs Child-Only cases. Findings are expected in 2009, and will include identifying the public or community agencies that provide social services for CalWORKs Child-Only cases. The study also seeks to identify the financial aid and services that are impacted by state and federal policy. The findings are expected to address the following policy and program areas as they relate to CalWORKs Child-Only cases:

- Description of Family and Household demographics in CalWORKs Child-Only Cases.
- Sources of Income and Sustenance for CalWORKs Child-Only Families.
- Characteristics of the Parent/Caregiver in CalWORKs Child-Only cases.
- Physical Characteristics of Home, Material Hardships, and Neighborhood Characteristics in communities where there is a density of CalWORKs Child-Only Cases.
- Engagement of the Parent/Caregiver into Child Abuse Prevention Services.
- Child's Well-Being.
- Access to Benefits and Service.

### **Citizen Review Panels (CRP)**

#### **Program Description**

The function of CRPs is to evaluate the effectiveness with which state and local child protection agencies are discharging their responsibilities. Evaluation involves examining child protection policies, practices, and procedures. Recommendations are then made to county and state governments for improvement.

CRPs bring together citizens, former consumers of services, foster parents, child welfare services professionals, court-appointed special advocates, children's attorneys, educators, representatives of tribal governments, representatives of county public health and mental health agencies, law enforcement officials and others to review these policies, practices and procedures.

**Objective**

To implement a new statewide panel by October 1, 2004, who will examine the policies practices and procedures of the state's CWS Agency.

**Activities/Results**

Twenty-two panel members were selected by October of 2004 and the number grew to 30 members over two years. In the past year, however, membership decreased. Technical assistance was provided to address the issue. The membership draws from child advocates, parent leaders, tribal leaders, foundation officers, county mental health managers, law enforcement, county counsels, alcohol and drug program administrators, foster parents, foster youth, social workers, probation officers and the Judicial Council. Membership is also geographically diverse with representatives from both metropolitan and rural counties in all parts of California.

The panel met quarterly in FFY 2007:

Each year the panel reviews, provides information, and comments upon the Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR), which updates the Title IV-B Child and Family Services plan prior its submission to Region IX of the Administration for Children and Families.

**Objective**

To maintain a minimum of three citizen review panels operating in the state each year. To ensure that there are a minimum of three citizen review panels in operation at all times.

**Activities /Results**

CDSS released a new Request for Applications to fund panels for the period of July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2009. San Mateo and Calaveras Counties applied for and received funding. In addition to the two local panels, there is a statewide CRP which brings the number of citizen review panels in California to the required three panels.

**Objective**

To provide general information to the public on the CRPs and to allow for public input.

**Activities/Results**

During FFY 2007, San Mateo and Calaveras counties presented findings and or recommendations to their respective boards of supervisors at meetings that were open to the public. The San Mateo County CRP sent representatives of the CRP to the Children's Collaborative Action Team to inform this group of the work of the CRP and to recruit members for the CRP.

## **Objective**

To enhance training opportunities available to panel members.

## **Activities/Results**

To facilitate understanding of the changing focus of the child welfare system in California, CDSS engaged a consultant who had background in child welfare service system improvement. The consultant, Louanne Shahandeh, provides consultation to panels through site visits, conference calls and e-mails, and assisted in drafting and organizing the CRP Resource Manual for California's counties.

October 1, 2007 – September 30, 2008, the following Citizen Review Panels received technical assistance: San Mateo County, Calaveras County and the Statewide CRP. Also receiving technical assistance was CDSS' Office of Child Abuse Prevention, who oversees the CRPs.

The Type of Technical Assistance Provided:

Site visits to CRP counties:

- Provision of support documents requested to assistance in the facilitation of CRP review activities as defined in individual Scope of Work.
- Provide program orientation and development of policies and procedures.
- Provide support documents, other county practices, current trends and data to support CRP objectives as requested by CRP.
- Telephone conference calls to obtain updates, provide guidance and answer questions.
- Review of and revision input regarding documents (i.e. quarterly reports, etc) submitted to CDSS.
- Review and revisions of all quarterly and annual report documents.
- Review of work plans, assist in formalization of objectives and corresponding review activities.
- Provision of on-going guidance to CRP counties as requested.
- Provision of on-going guidance, CRP updates and the refinement of reports to CDSS.

Technical Assistance to Counties:

All technical assistance provided was related to support documents and program orientation that assisted in activities as they related to their objectives. All quarterly reports were reviewed with input for revisions prior to submission to OCAP.

San Mateo County:

All technical assistance provided was directly related to support documents, best practices, articles etc that assisted in the review activities as they related to their objectives. All quarterly reports were reviewed with input for revisions prior to submission to OCAP. Annual Report was also reviewed.

#### State CRP:

Technical assistance and consultation provided via telephone conference regarding membership issues on the State Panel.

#### CDSS' Office of Child Abuse Prevention:

Technical assistance given:

- Training to new CRP/CDSS staff regarding all aspects of the CRPs.
- Revised quarterly and annual report formats.
- Review and revisions to all quarterly and annual reports working directly with the local CRPs to make needed changes.
- Conference calls to provide updates on CRP activities.
- CRP site visit reports to CDSS.

#### Annual CRP Meeting:

The annual meeting was held in July, with members from both Calaveras and San Mateo CRP's attending. Focus of this meeting was to review quarterly and annual report formats, review Scope of Work plans and discuss expectations for completion of the documents as well as establish timeframe of reports.

#### **Objective**

To integrate county CRP panels into a statewide CWS advisory structure.

#### **Activities/Results**

During FFY 2007, the statewide CRP reviewed the annual reports submitted by the county panels. The panel focused on the recommendations that panels made to the state and reviewed the recommendations to county departments to determine if there were statewide implications. The state panel provided feedback on the recommendations to CDSS staff for their consideration in responding to the county panels. The CDSS utilized its own review and the feedback from the state panel to determine whether programmatic, policy or legislative changes are needed in the statewide CWS program.

#### **Objective**

To maintain compliance with all federal requirements regarding CRPs.

#### **Activities/Results**

All county panels were required to submit an annual report including recommendations to the state and/or local government to CDSS. The statewide CRP made its recommendations to the CDSS. The CDSS responded to the recommendations made by San Mateo and Calaveras counties by May 2007.

The two county panels conducted a review process and the state panel reviewed CDSS policies and practices.

Individual counties received public input in a variety of ways:

- San Mateo County received public input through the Children's Collaborative Action Team (CCAT) and its subcommittee, the Family and Community Advisory Committee.
- Calaveras County presented its recommendations and findings to the County Board. County CRPs have expressed interest in receiving direction from the federal government in terms of appropriate practices, policies and procedures with regard to public input. Technical assistance was requested from the National Resource Center for Child Protective Services.

### **Future Directions**

In FFY 2008, CDSS plans to utilize an "All County Information Notice" to issue a request for applications to operate a county CRP in the new funding cycle. This cycle will begin on July 1, 2009 and end on June 30, 2011. As a result of requests made by the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA), priority will be given to counties that have not been funded before. Also, see the full report in the Annual Reports section.

## **ANNUAL REPORTS**

## **CHILD FATALITY ANALYSIS**

Since 2001, as part of its oversight responsibility for the delivery of child welfare services, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Children Services Operations Bureau (CSOB) has conducted electronic and, as necessary, on-site case reviews of child fatalities and prepared summaries on the circumstances of the death. These reviews included all children under the agency's supervision or previously known to the agency and had not been limited to children in foster care.

The information from the reviews has been used to improve regulatory changes or policy changes that will protect vulnerable children. Further, the information identified additional training needs of social work staff. The CSOB also completed ad hoc reviews of fatalities based upon requests by the CDSS Directorate, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), or county Child Welfare/Probation Departments.

In December 2005, CDSS received notice from ACF that the State was out of compliance with the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) requirements for states to have "provisions which allow for public disclosure of the findings or information about the case of child abuse and neglect which has resulted in a child fatality or near fatality." Prior to the implementation of the Corrective Action Plan (CAP) the CSOB had not reviewed near fatalities or provided case specific child fatality summaries for public release. Effective July 21, 2006, pursuant to All County Letter (ACL) 06-24, the CDSS implemented a CAP with ACF. This plan required counties to submit a Child Fatality/Near Fatality Questionnaire to CDSS if:

- The county has reasonable suspicion that the fatality/near fatality was caused by abuse and/or neglect.
- A fatality/near fatality initially appears unrelated to abuse and/or neglect, but the county subsequently has reasonable suspicion that in fact it may have been so caused.

The plan and instructional ACL provided the counties with a definition of near fatality to guide them in reporting. For the purposes of reporting, a near fatality is defined as "a severe childhood injury or condition caused by abuse and/or neglect which results in the child receiving critical care for at least 24 hours following the child's admission to a critical care unit."

### **Aggregate Child Fatality/Near Fatality Information**

The CDSS received notification from county child welfare agencies of 347 child fatalities/near fatalities occurring between January 1, 2007, through December 31, 2007, that when submitted by the counties were suspected as being caused by child abuse and/or neglect. Of these, 260 notifications were submitted for child fatalities and 87 notifications were submitted for near fatalities.



## Child Fatalities

The CDSS received 260 notifications of child fatalities for calendar year 2007 that were suspected by the child welfare agency as being caused by abuse and/or neglect. The breakdown of cases by abuse versus neglect was as follows:

- 187 Neglect
- 46 Abuse
- 10 Neglect and Abuse
- 17 Other\*

\*“Other” reflects notifications that were submitted by counties that at the time of the fatality it was not clear to the county whether the fatality met the “suspected” reporting requirements under CAPTA and as such the county reported as a precaution. In these cases there was no referral generated for the victim child and/or the disposition for the fatality was unfounded, inconclusive, or evaluated out.

The specific causes of death for those fatalities that were suspected of being caused by abuse and/or neglect are categorized in the table below. These determinations were made by either the county child welfare agency, coroner or law enforcement and reflect what was reported to CDSS by the county child welfare agency.

- 67 Homicide
- 32 Trauma to the head and/or body (includes shaken baby)
- 19 Natural Causes
- 16 Drowning
- 11 Vehicular Accidents (Non-DUI)
- 8 Co-sleeping
- 84 Other (includes falls, suffocation, found unresponsive, lack of prenatal care)
- 7 Suicide
- 5 Vehicular Accidents (DUI)
- 5 Maternal Drug Use
- 4 Fire
- 1 Medical Neglect
- 1 Burns

The CSOB reviewed the notifications as well as CWS/CMS when appropriate to determine whether the child and/or any member of the household had any current or prior involvement with a child welfare services (CWS) agency. It should be noted that prior CWS involvement includes dispositions of allegations that were determined to be unfounded, inconclusive, substantiated or evaluated out.

The CWS agency involvement in the 260 child fatalities was as follows:

- 157 Not a current child welfare client but had history or prior referrals/cases
- 62 No prior or current child welfare history
- 21 In-home with an open child welfare case or referral
- 20 Placed out of home with an open case or referral

One hundred fifty-three of the 260 fatalities reported were children four years of age and younger or 59 percent of the total fatalities reported. Of the 153 children, 106 were between the ages of birth to one year or approximately 41 percent of the 260 fatalities reported.

## Child Near Fatalities

The CDSS received 87 notifications of child near fatalities for calendar year 2007 that were suspected as being caused by abuse and/or neglect. The breakdown of cases by abuse versus neglect was as follows:

- 48 Neglect
- 25 Abuse
- 12 Neglect and Abuse
- 2 Other\*

\*“Other” reflects notifications that were submitted by counties that at the time of the near fatality it was not clear to the county whether the near fatality met the “suspected” reporting requirements and as such the county reported as a precaution. In these cases there was no referral generated for the victim child and/or the disposition for the near fatality was unfounded, inconclusive, or evaluated out.

The specific causes of these near fatalities which were suspected of being caused by abuse and/or neglect are categorized in the table below. These determinations were made by either the county child welfare agency or law enforcement and reflect what was reported to CDSS by the county.

- 47 Trauma to the head and/or body (includes shaken baby)
- 5 Attempted Suicide
- 4 Near Drowning
- 4 Medical Neglect
- 4 Burns
- 4 Non-DUI Vehicular Accidents
- 2 Vehicular Accidents (DUI)
- 2 Crime
- 1 Co-sleeping
- 14 Other (includes falls, suffocation, found unresponsive)

The CSOB reviewed the notifications as well as CWS/CMS reports when appropriate to determine whether the child and/or any member of the household had any current or prior involvement with a child welfare services agency. It should be noted that prior CWS involvement includes dispositions of referrals that were determined to be unfounded, inconclusive, substantiated or evaluated out.

The CWS agency involvement in the 87 child near fatalities that were suspected as being caused by abuse and/or neglect was:

- 51 Not a current child welfare client but had history or prior referrals/cases
- 22 No prior or current child welfare history
- 6 In-home with an open child welfare case or referral
- 8 Placed out of home with an open case or referral

Sixty-seven of the 87 near fatalities or 77 percent were children four years of age and under. Of the 67 children, 37 were between the ages of birth to one year or 43 percent of the 87 near fatalities reported.

## **Child Fatality/Near Fatalities Found to be the Result of Abuse and/or Neglect**

### **Fatalities**

Sixty-two of the 260 fatality notifications received by CDSS for calendar year 2007 were reported as being found to be caused by abuse and/or neglect. The breakdown of cases by abuse versus neglect was as follows:

- 28 Neglect
- 23 Abuse
- 5 Neglect and Abuse
- 6 Other\*

\*"Other" reflects notifications that were submitted by counties where there was no referral generated for the victim child.

The specific causes of death for those fatalities that were found to be caused by abuse and/or neglect are categorized in the table below. These determinations were made by either the county child welfare agency, coroner or law enforcement and reflect what was reported to CDSS by the county child welfare agency:

- 29 Trauma to the head and/or body  
(includes shaken baby)
- 11 Drowning
- 4 Vehicular Accidents (DUI)
- 3 Homicide
- 2 Vehicular Accidents (Non-DUI)
- 2 Co-sleeping
- 1 Suicide
- 1 Medical Neglect
- 1 Burn
- 8 Other (includes fall, suffocation,  
found unresponsive)

The CSOB reviewed the notifications as well as CWS/CMS when appropriate to determine whether the child and/or any member of the household had any current or prior involvement with a child welfare services agency. It should be noted that prior CWS involvement includes dispositions of referrals that were determined to be unfounded, inconclusive, substantiated or evaluated out.

The CWS agency involvement in the 62 child fatalities was:

- 33 Not a current child welfare client but  
had history or prior referrals/cases
- 23 No prior or current child welfare  
history
- 2 In-home with an open child  
welfare case or referral
- 4 Placed out of home with an open  
case or referral\*

\* Note - One of the four fatalities in out-of-home care was the result of abuse that occurred prior to the child entering foster care and was not the result of abuse and/or neglect in foster care.

## Child Near Fatalities

Forty-nine of the 87 child near fatality notifications received by CDSS for calendar year 2007 were found to be caused by abuse and/or neglect. The breakdown of cases by abuse versus neglect is as follows:

- 23 Abuse
- 12 Neglect and Abuse
- 13 Neglect
- 1 Other\*

\*Other" reflects notification that was submitted by county where no referral for abuse and/or neglect was generated for the victim child.

The specific causes of near fatality findings are categorized in the table below.

- 36 Trauma to the head and/or body (includes suspected shaken baby)
- 2 Non-DUI Vehicular Accidents
- 2 Vehicular DUI Accidents
- 2 Attempted Suicide
- 2 Medical Neglect
- 1 Co-sleeping
- 1 Near Drowning
- 3 Other (includes child found unresponsive, failure to thrive and stab wounds)

The CSOB reviewed the notifications as well as CWS/CMS when appropriate to determine whether the child and/or any member of the household had any current or prior involvement with a child welfare services agency. As mentioned above, prior CWS involvement includes dispositions of referrals that were determined to be unfounded, inconclusive, substantiated or evaluated out. The CWS agency involvement in the 49 child near fatalities was as follows:

- 24 Not a current child welfare client but had history or prior referrals/cases
- 3 In-home with an open child welfare case or referral
- 19 No prior or current child welfare history
- 3 Placed out of home with an open case or referral

## Analysis of Data

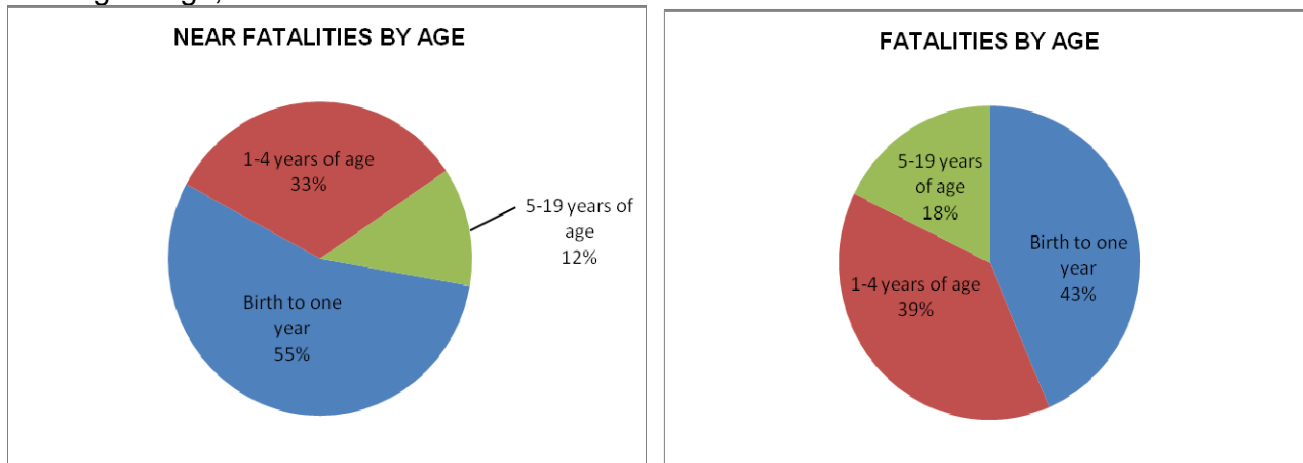
### Introduction

The following analysis is from those notifications submitted to CDSS by county child welfare services agencies which were found to be caused by abuse and/or neglect. The CDSS has reviewed the notifications and CWS/CMS where appropriate and compiled data based on age and gender of the child, whether the fatality or near fatality was caused by abuse versus neglect, circumstances related to the fatality/near fatality, and whether the child and/or any member of the household at the time of the fatality/near fatality had any current or prior involvement with a child welfare services agency.

### What Groups of Children are Most Vulnerable

The CDSS review of the 62 child fatalities which were found to be caused by abuse and/or neglect indicates that the most vulnerable populations are our youngest populations. In fact,

51 of the 62 child fatalities, or 82 percent of the total reported, were children four years of age and under. Additionally, 27 of the 62, or 43 percent, were children between the ages of birth to one year. It should also be noted that there appears to be little correlation between fatalities and the gender of the child. Of the total fatalities for children in the birth to four years of age range, 24 were males and 27 were females.



The CDSS' analysis of the 49 near fatalities found to be caused by abuse and/or neglect indicates similar findings as those reported for fatalities. Again, the most vulnerable population for near fatalities is those children from birth to four years of age. Forty-three of the 49 near fatalities, or 88 percent of the total reported, were children four years of age and under, with 27 of the 49, or 55 percent, of these were for children between the ages of birth to one year. As with fatalities, there appears to be no significant correlation linked to the gender of the child. In the birth to four years of age group for near fatalities, 22 were males and 21 were females.

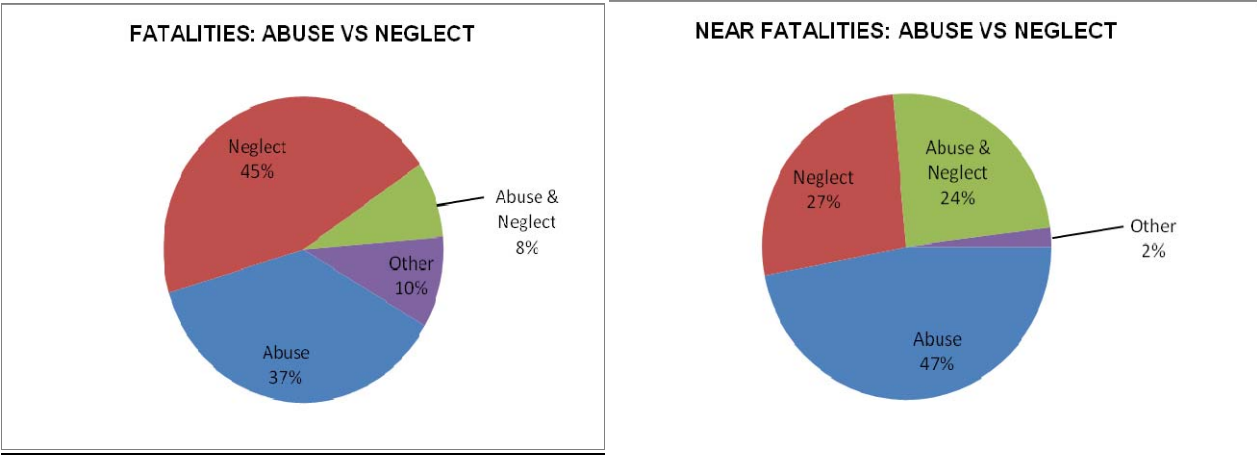
### **Neglect Versus Child Abuse – What Is Known**

In determining where along the spectrum of the CWS delivery system programmatic or policy change should occur, it is important to understand the distinctions between abuse versus neglect. Neglect is the result of the parent's or caregiver's failure to act to care for and protect the child. It does not result from something the caregiver does but what he/she fails to do. Abuse on the other hand, is a non-accidental act on the part of the parent or caregiver which directly results in injury or harm to the child.

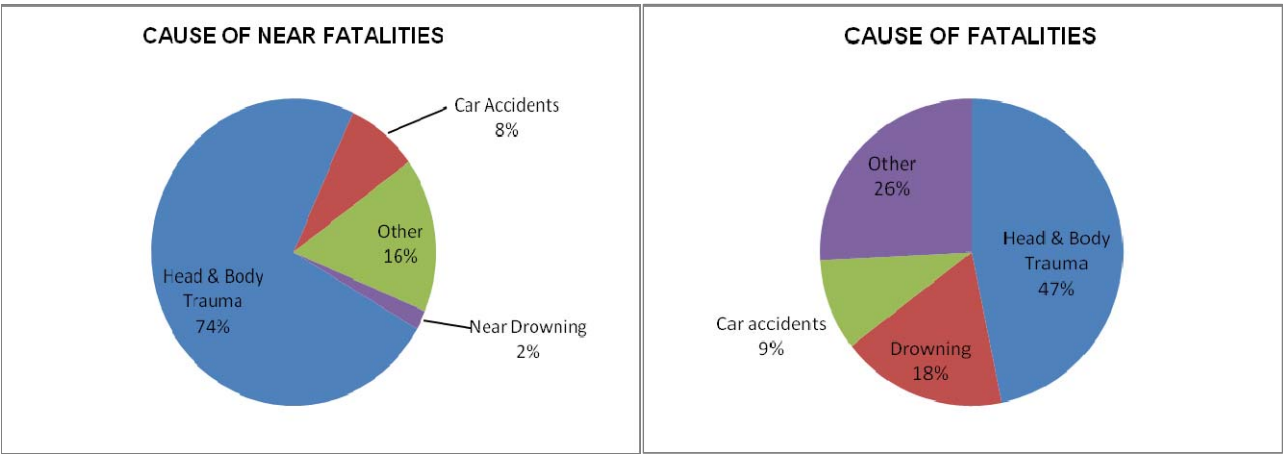
Review findings indicate that for the 62 fatalities reported to CDSS it was almost evenly divided between allegations of abuse versus neglect, with 23 abuse allegations (37 percent), 28 neglect allegations (45 percent), 5 abuse and neglect allegations (8 percent ) and 6 "other" (10 percent). This data similarly holds true for the birth to 4 years age group with 21 abuse allegations (41 percent), 19 neglect allegations (37 percent), 5 abuse and neglect allegations (10 percent) and 6 "other" (12 percent).

However, the findings change for near fatalities with a greater number of near fatalities resulting from abuse. Of the 49 near fatalities reported to CDSS there were 23 abuse allegations (47 percent), 13 neglect allegations (27 percent), 12 abuse and neglect allegations (24 percent) and 1 "other." This data similarly holds true for the birth to 4 years

age group, with 23 abuse allegations (53 percent), 7 neglect allegations (16 percent), 12 abuse and neglect allegations (28 percent) and 1 “other.”



**What is the Cause of these Fatalities/Near Fatalities**

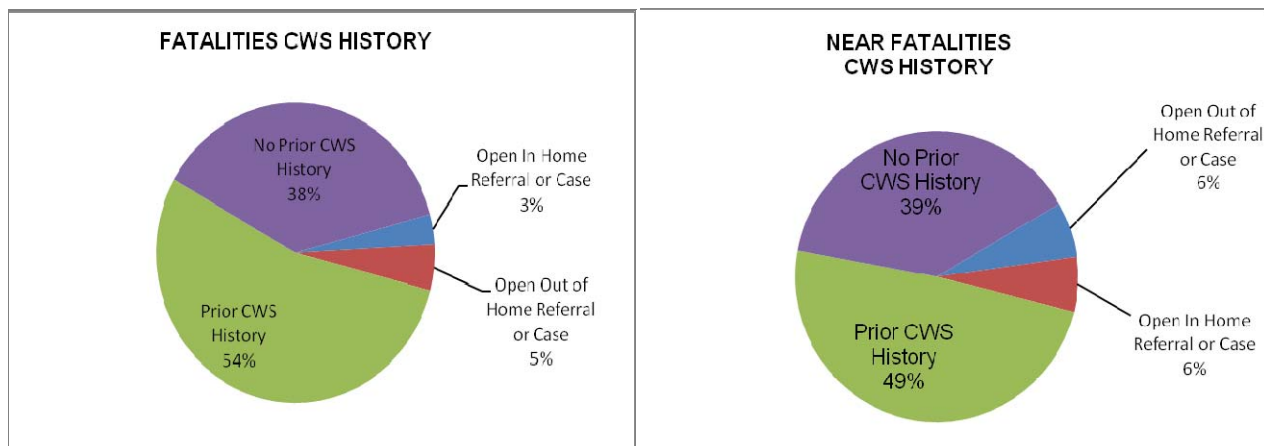


A review of the notifications submitted to CDSS indicates that the number one cause of fatalities/near fatalities is non-accidental head and body trauma.

**What Is Known about Prior Child Welfare Services Involvement**

In reviewing notifications submitted by counties for fatalities/near fatalities that were found to be caused by the result of abuse and/or neglect, it appears that approximately 50 percent of the children were in families that had some prior CWS history. However, the reader should keep in mind that prior child welfare services history does not necessarily mean that a child or family had an “open” CWS case. In many, the CWS history included allegations and/or referrals that were determined to be unfounded, inconclusive, or evaluated out, precluding a formal CWS case action. Additionally, the CWS history noted may not have included the child

who was the subject of the fatality/near fatality or the same household composition at the time of the fatality/near fatality. For example, the victim child that was the subject of the fatality or near fatality may not have been born when prior referrals were being investigated. Or the mother or father that were named in prior referrals may no longer be living in the home at the time of the most recent referral related to the fatality/near fatality.



\*Please note that one child fatality out of 62 (identified on page 4) is not represented in the chart above (Fatalities CWS History) because the abuse that was found to be the cause of the child's death occurred before the child entered foster care.

## **Current Programmatic Efforts to Identify and Prevent Child Fatalities**

### **Current and Future Data Collection Efforts**

During the last year, the CDSS has made great strides in implementing new public disclosure requirements in California that will greatly improve the information available to the public on cases involving child fatalities that are the result of abuse and/or neglect. During 2007, California enacted Senate Bill (SB) 39, Chapter 468, Statutes of 2007. This legislation clarified the disclosure of child fatality information in California. SB 39 requires that beginning January 1, 2008, local agencies respond directly to public requests for information related to a child fatality that is the result of abuse and/or neglect. The CDSS will continue to have responsibility for responding to public requests for information on near fatalities pursuant to All County Letter 08-33, dated March 14, 2008. The CDSS will meet this responsibility by releasing a statement of findings/notification that includes CAPTA required information. The counties will continue to submit to CDSS a statement of findings and information for both child fatalities and near fatalities that are the result of abuse and/or neglect via notifications. These statements of findings and information will replace the process outlined in ACL 06-24, including the child fatality and near fatality questionnaire, and will serve as the basis for CAPTA disclosure in the future as well as the analysis presented in future APSRs.

During the next year, the CDSS will continue to strive to improve data collection and analysis efforts to obtain a better understanding of the data trends related to child fatalities /near fatalities that are the result of abuse and/or neglect. Among these activities is the initiation of a data sharing agreement with the Department of Public Health. Through this partnership,

the CDSS will share relevant CWS/CMS information related to child fatalities so that it can be reconciled with data from other statewide fatality databases (Child Abuse Central Index [CACI], Homicide Files and Vital Statistics). This should permit a better understanding of data trends including what populations are most vulnerable, common causes of fatalities, and what can be done to reduce child fatalities in California which are the result of abuse and/or neglect.

The CDSS will also compare county data submitted via statements of finding/notifications with CWS/CMS and other child welfare outcome data to gain better insight into trend information which can be used to inform child welfare practice. Integration of this information with the local county outcome and accountability planning efforts will help California counties better monitor and assess the quality of services to children throughout California, and improve program and practice to better serve children and families. This includes a review of the trends in child abuse and neglect that should be targeted by the CDSS' Office of Child Abuse and Neglect in its prevention strategies.

### **Policy Efforts**

During FY 2006-07, the CDSS contracted with the Interagency Council on Abuse and Neglect (ICAN) for county and regional child death review team training. ICAN provided training to child death review team members in multiple regions of the State. The training provided information to team members on properly identifying child abuse and neglect related deaths and review team processes. While the Child Death Review team training had many significant accomplishments during FY 2006/07, it became clear that a reexamination of the training focus and content needs to occur in order for the training to remain relevant and purposeful for the child death review team attendees and child welfare services staff alike. With the advent of Senate Bill 39 (Chapter 468, Statutes of 2007) in California, counties have increased responsibilities with respect to the disclosure of cases involving child abuse and/or neglect that result in the fatality/near fatality of children. Additionally, there has been increased focus on achieving consistency in the classification of child fatalities among child death review team members, and uniform operational definitions.

As a result of these issues, the CDSS in coordination with the Department of Public Health, Department of Justice and the Office of Emergency Services has begun to reexamine the focus of the training, the intended objectives, and any needed curriculum adjustments. During this reevaluation we will also solicit input from the child death review teams so that we remain aware of areas of interest and need. It is hoped that through this collaborative revaluation process, a curriculum can be developed that is both purposeful and relevant and remains vital in helping professionals understand and accept the death review process as a key to prevention.

The CDSS also continues to be an active participant on the State Child Death Review Council. Through this partnership with local child death review team representatives as well as other State agencies including Public Health, Justice, Office of Emergency services, etc., the CDSS is working towards obtaining a better understanding of child fatality data issues and trends as well as focused and effective prevention campaigns.



## **How California Meets the Provisions of Section 106(b)(2)(A)(xxii)**

As part of the reauthorization language for CAPTA, each state must describe the provisions and procedures they have in place for criminal background checks for prospective foster and adoptive parents and other adult relatives and non-relative residing in the household in accord with section 106(b)(2)(A)(xxii).

California statute, as found in Welfare and Institutions Code section 361.4 (b) and 361.4(c), provides that whenever a child may be placed in the home of a relative, or the home of any prospective guardian or other person who is not a licensed or certified foster parent, a state and federal level criminal records check shall be conducted. The check shall be conducted on anyone in the household who is 18 years of age or older. Within five days of the criminal records check, a fingerprint check is initiated through the California DOJ to ensure the accuracy of the criminal records check. DOJ shall forward the fingerprint check to the FBI. A check of CACI shall also be done. Welfare and Institutions Code section 361.4(d)(1) provides that if the person has no criminal history, the home may be considered for placement.

In addition to the Welfare and Institution Codes cited above, the state's regulations governing licensure/approval of foster and adoptive homes also require that all related and non-related adults residing in a prospective foster family/adoptive home undergo a criminal background check:

- Title 22, Division 6, section 80019, General Licensing Requirements – Criminal Record Clearances (includes small foster family homes).
- Title 22, Division 6, section 88019 (applicable to Foster Family Agency certified foster family homes).
- Title 22, Division 6, section 89219 (applicable to Foster Family Homes).
- Title 22, Division 6, section 89213 (applicable to approved relative and non-relative extended family member foster family homes).
- Title 22, Division 6, section 89319 (applicable to Foster Family Homes); and
- Title 22, Division 2, section 35184 (applicable to adoptive homes).

**CAPTA Budget for Federal Fiscal Year  
Basic State Grants**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>FFY 2007 (Actual)</b>	<b>FFY 2008 (Estimate)</b>	<b>Total</b>
Projects (90%)	\$2,877,112	\$2,762,690	\$5,639,802
Administrative Costs* (10%)	\$319,679	\$306,966	\$629,645
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$3,196,791</b>	<b>\$3,069,656</b>	<b>\$6,266,447</b>
* Administrative costs include:			
Staff	\$278,121	\$267,060	\$545,181
Travel	\$41,558	\$39,906	\$81,464

## **SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CALIFORNIA CITIZEN REVIEW PANELS**

### **October 1, 2006-September 30, 2007**

Since 1999, California has been required to have at least three Citizen Review Panels (CRPs) in operation in order to receive its grant for child abuse and neglect prevention and treatment programs under the federal CAPTA. Since that time, the CDSS/OCAP has provided the funding and technical support necessary to ensure that at least three counties operate CRPs and that there is a body that functions as a statewide CRP by reviewing the policies, practices and procedures of California's CWS System.

This report covers the activities of California's CRPs for FFY 2007, which began on October 1, 2006 and ended on September 30, 2007.

### **County Citizen Review Panels**

#### **Objective**

To ensure that there are a minimum of three county-level citizen review panels in operation at all times.

#### **Activities**

San Mateo and Calaveras Counties received funding to operate their CRPs during this reporting period. The third CRP is the state Citizens Review Panel (CCRP). The report on their activities, findings and recommendations, along with a discussion of their future directions for FFY 2007 can be found below.

#### **Future Directions**

The fourth citizen review panel funding cycle began October 1, 2006 and will end on September 30, 2008. The selection process for the fourth funding cycle began in March 2006, with the issuance of an All County Information Notice (ACIN) requesting applications to operate a CRP. County Fiscal Letter 07/08-03 authorized funding for the final cycle, which ends on September 30, 2008. CDSS/OCAP will be extending and augmenting the funded CRP counties through FFY 2008/09, while also starting a statewide solicitation process designed to recruit future CRP counties.

The Calaveras County CRP Annual Report was submitted on October 31, 2007 and the Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency responded on November 15, 2007. The San Mateo County CRP submitted its annual report on October 31, 2007 and the San Mateo County Human Services Agency responded on June 18, 2008. CDSS/OCAP has noted that CAPTA requires that the county and state responses be given within six months of the submittal of the CRP reports. San Mateo County was alerted to this fact and subsequently submitted its report. CDSS/OCAP staff have developed a process by which each participating county will be notified upon receipt of the CRP reports and reminded of the response due dates. CDSS/OCAP staff will more diligently monitor the timeliness of such reports and responses. The process will also be revised so that both the date the CRP report is submitted and the date the state/county responds will be clearly documented.

#### **Objective**

To provide training and on-going technical assistance to California's citizen review panels.

### **Activities**

Strategies, Region II continues to provide technical assistance via a sub-contract to a consultant, Ms. Louanne Shenandoah. During this reporting period approximately 104 hours of technical assistance has been provided to the California CRPs. Technical assistance has included program orientation, development of policies and procedures, and self-evaluation. Services have been provided during site visits and via conference calls.

### **Objective**

Review and respond to panel recommendations.

### **Activities**

Calaveras and San Mateo counties submitted recommendations to their respective counties. San Mateo County made recommendations to the county government only, while Calaveras submitted one recommendation to the state and five county recommendations. The California Citizens Review Panel (CCRP) submitted seven recommendations to the state regarding the efficacy of California's safety and risk assessment tools being used in all 58 California counties.

The Calaveras County recommendations included addressing local child welfare staff training needs, increasing Parent Partner Services, increasing use of the Family Group Decision Matrix, and continuing work and support services for reunified children. The county child welfare department has confirmed receipt of the recommendations. The recommendation made to the state contains a request to update the CDSS' Manual of Policy and Procedure (MPP) Division 31 Regulations in order to reflect child welfare redesign and improvements..

The San Mateo County CRP made six recommendations to the county child welfare department and none to the state. County recommendations include a request to receive more information on the Team Decision Making goal setting process, review of each county re-entry case, and suggested the increase of parent partners as a strategy to meet the need of the diverse children and families within the county child welfare system in San Mateo County. The final request is for the county to provide the CRP with quarterly status reports on the Differential Response services.

CDSS responded to the recommendations that had been addressed to it by May 13, 2008. CDSS/OCAP has reviewed and responded May 2008, to the recommendations from the panels with their county CWS agencies.

### **The Statewide Citizen Review Panel**

### **Objective**

To ensure that there is a review body that examines the state level Child Welfare Services System.

## **Activities**

The California Citizen Review Panel (CCRP), which grew out of the CWS Stakeholders' Group, became active in September 2005. During this reporting period the CCRP completed the following:

- Submitted comments on the draft of the state of California's Title IV Child and Family Services Plan Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR).
- Served (on-going) on the Steering Committee of the state of California's Child and Family Service Review.
- Made a presentation about Citizen Review Panels and their role in the CWS to the San Mateo County Citizen's Review Panel.
- Reviewed the comments and recommendations of the county Citizen Review Panels.
- Investigated the implementation and efficacy of safety and risk assessment tools being used, or about to be used, in all 58 counties in California.
- Held four (4) meetings in Sacramento, California.

## **Future Directions**

The CCRP is scheduled to meet quarterly during FY 2007/08, while continuing to serve as the Prevention Advisory Council (PAC) for California. The CCRP continues to track the uniform safety assessments implemented in all 58 California counties. Additional future activities include examination of family reunification plans where children have been removed from the home, the ICWA, and state funding methodologies; including review of how state funding is monitored and audited.

Appendix A: Statewide Citizen Review Panel Member List

<b>NAME</b>	<b>TITLE and ORGANIZATION</b>
<b>Elaine Azzopardi</b>	San Mateo County Human Services Manager
<b>Mara Bernstein</b>	Center for Families, Children & the Courts, Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts
<b>Mike Carll</b>	California Parent Leadership Team, Parents Anonymous of California, Parent Leader
<b>Miryam Choca</b>	California State Strategies, Casey Family Programs, Director
<b>Kate Cleary</b>	Consortium for Children, Executive Director
<b>Kelly Cleary</b>	Consortium for Children
<b>William Fuser</b>	Lilliput Children's Services, Executive Director (Retired)
<b>Nanette Gledhill</b>	Cal-ICWA, Director of Operations
<b>Corene Kendrick</b>	Youth Law Center
<b>Pamela Maxwell</b>	California Parent Leadership Team, Parent's Anonymous of California, Parent Leader
<b>Michelle Neumann- Ribner</b>	San Diego County Office of County Counsel, Juvenile Division, Senior Deputy County Counsel
<b>James M. Owens</b>	Los Angeles County Counsel, Dependency Division, Assistant County Counsel, California County Counsel Association
<b>Lois Patrick</b>	El Dorado County Children's Services, Deputy Director (Retired)
<b>Karen Pank</b>	Probation Officers of California, Chief
<b>Jennifer Rodriguez</b>	California Youth Connection, Former Foster Youth

## **San Mateo County**

### **County Profile**

San Mateo County is located in the western portion of the San Francisco Bay Area, directly below the city and county of San Francisco. It is one of California's most affluent counties and part of the "Silicon Valley," home of many high-tech firms. A unique characteristic of this county is that many residents are foreign-born, highly educated professionals who are proficient in English.

San Mateo's population is approximately 733,496 people, which is estimated to be 1.9% of California's population, of whom approximately 164,018 are children under the age of 18. In SFY 2005/06 there were 721 emergency response referrals and 464 children in foster care.

White persons (non-Hispanic/Latino) make up roughly 50% of the population, while persons of Hispanic/Latino origin make up 22%. Asians are 20% of the population, persons who reported being "some other race" are 10%, persons who reported being "two or more races" are 5.0%, Blacks or African Americans are 3.5%. Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders are 1.3%, and American Indians and Alaska Natives are less than 1% of the population.

The median household income for the county is \$70,819. Per capita income is \$36,045 and the percentage of persons below the poverty line is 5.8%. The median household income for California is \$47,493 and the state's per capita income is \$22,711. In the state of California approximately 14.2% of the population is below the poverty line.

### **Activities**

During FY 2006/07, the San Mateo CRP focused on monitoring the recommendations it developed during SFY 2005/06. Activity included receiving CRP training designed to enhance the knowledge and understanding of the CWS to increase the panel members' ability to meet the CRP requirements.

The San Mateo CRP also developed operational guidelines that describe the desired make-up of the CRP, which maintains ongoing efforts to build membership within the established guidelines for the purpose of increasing the panel's diversity.

The San Mateo CRP also worked on launching a county CRP web site and reported that it is active by June 2008.

The CRP continued to examine the San Mateo Team Decision Making model, promoting increased use of the model while expanding opportunities for broad community input regarding the model's effectiveness.

The final activity monitored by the CRP was the Child Welfare re-entry rate. Areas examined included accessibility for parents who may have language, reading or writing barriers.

## **Formal Recommendations**

The San Mateo panel made the following formal recommendations for FY 2006/07 to the county:

1. County Children and Family Services (CFS) should clarify/clearly define the goals of TDMs and make those goals clear to all, prior to implementing an effective evaluation of the TDM process and outcomes, including short and long term assessment of the outcomes.
2. CFS should allow CRP to review each re-entry case for the purpose of accessing narrative and anecdotal information.
3. CFS should proceed with the development and implementation of a parent as partner program and provide CRP with quarterly status reports.
4. CFS should continue implementation of the new parent education curriculum and provide CRP with evaluation information by June 2008, following the first year of the program.
5. CFS should continue to ensure that all materials used to educate parents about the CWS are accessible to families who may have language barriers, communication challenges or learning difficulties, and report to CRP in six months.
6. CFS should continue to closely monitor the implementation of Differential Response and report to CRP with quarterly status reports.

## **Future Directions**

The CRP will be addressing the following priorities in the upcoming year:

- Continued recruitment of new members.
- Assessing training and technical needs.
- Monitoring TDM implementation by receiving and reviewing quarterly reports that are submitted to the Stuart Foundation by the HHSA and requesting additional information as appropriate (i.e., results of participant evaluations).
- Receiving a joint report from Sphere Institute and HHSA on factors that are impacting re-entry.
- Continuing to monitor quarterly performance reports (AB 636) on system improvement.

## **Calaveras County**

### **County Profile**

Calaveras County received funding to operate a CRP for the 2005-2008 funding cycle. This is the first time that the county has applied and received funding for a CRP. Calaveras



County is located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, approximately 135 miles west of Lake Tahoe.

The population for Calaveras County consists of approximately 46,028 residents of which 8,401 are children 18 years and younger. The county racial demographics consists of 89% Caucasian/white, 7% Latino/Hispanic, 2% Native American Indian, and the remaining 2% of the county population is represented by all other groups. The county child protection agency received 801 emergency response referrals while having 130 substantiated cases during SFY 2005/06. There are 98 children in placement which represents 11.7% of the children population under the age of 18.

## **Activities**

During SFY 2006/07 the Calaveras CRP combined membership with the County Child Abuse Prevention Council to have a larger and more diverse group. The CRP continues to support CRP membership with a program orientation and manual/guide that includes a confidentiality statement, historical information on CRP activities and information on the county SIP. The CRP has established protocols regarding county case information and data.

## **Formal Recommendations**

1. The Calaveras County Child Welfare Department internal policies and procedures are in need of updates. These recommended updates may provide additional supports to the 12 week in-house training program provided to all social workers, as recommended by the University of California Davis Training Academy.
2. Case reviews revealed a need for the Calaveras county child welfare department to offer Parent Partner services to families as a strategy to improve family reunification outcomes. The CRP recommends families be included in the development of their family case plan and that the case plan be reviewed several times to ensure families understand what is expected of them to reunify with their children.
3. The focus group committee of the Calaveras CRP recommends the inclusion of the family in the development of the case plan. The committee believes this action will improve family buy-in and result in better outcomes for children and families. Additionally the CRP requests that reunification services continue in the home after the children have been returned
4. The recommendation made to the state contains a request to update the CDSS' Manual of Policy and Procedure (MPP) Division 31 Regulations in order to reflect ongoing federal PIP language. CDSS agrees and this update is currently in process.

## **Future Directions**

Over the next year, the CRP will continue to research and evaluate the county's rate of children re-entering the foster care system. The CRP will be focusing on the following areas:

- Policies and Procedures regarding re-entry into foster care.
- Re-evaluating Parents understanding of their case plans.

- Research cost and payment options for drug and alcohol services.

# **CHAFEE FOSTER CARE INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM/EDUCATION AND TRAINING VOUCHERS PROGRAM ANNUAL PROGRESS AND SERVICES REPORT**

## **Program Contact Person**

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Independent Living Program Policy Unit  
California Department of Social Services  
744 P Street, M.S. 14-78  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 651-7464

## **1. Program Plan Narrative**

1) The CDSS administers, supervises or oversees the programs carried out under this plan; 2) CDSS agrees to cooperate in national evaluations of the effects of the independent living programs implemented to achieve the purposes of this plan; and 3) CDSS has reported on those accomplishments for the FFY 2008 that are promising practices, and demonstrated state technical assistance to counties in the provision of core services. While there were no significant programmatic changes made during the reporting period, CDSS continues its efforts to develop and implement promising practices to improve the delivery of services to current and former foster youth who are eligible for Independent Living Program (ILP) services.

The Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP), available on the CWS/CMS, is a written service delivery plan that identifies the youth's emancipation goals and the specific skills needed to prepare the youth to live independently upon leaving foster care. The plan is mutually agreed upon by the youth, his or her social worker/probation officer, the youth's caregiver and other supportive adults.

The CDSS, in preparation for implementing the Chafee National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD), has been collaborating with counties to identify and develop methods for capturing information related to the demographics and outcomes of foster youth who receive ILP services. A workgroup, convened with members from CWDA, state and county employees, has identified a new method of data collection for all child welfare youth receiving ILP Services. The new process is currently under finalization and implementation is expected to start October 1, 2008. This will allow us time to test our new data collection method and make any necessary adjustments before data submission to the federal government is required.

An additional workgroup, with members from CWDA, state and county employees, will be convened to identify the best methodology for planning and implementing the data collection on all foster youth in the baseline and follow-up populations for the purposes of NYTD. Additionally, three CDSS employees, consisting of program and data systems managers, will be attending a technical conference in July 2008, presented by the federal Children's Bureau,

to gain a better understanding of what the CDSS needs to do to successfully collect and submit required data for NYTD.

The CDSS continues to require the submission of the ILP Narrative Report and Plan. All 58 counties must report relevant data regarding the administration of the ILP. Counties report on program policies/processes such as: equitable access to services for disabled youth, culturally appropriate services for Tribal youth, services for homeless youth, and services for parenting and pregnant youth. The data provided by counties is utilized to determine the need for technical assistance and to help counties improve in specific areas of service delivery. The report also helps us to identify innovative or best practices utilized by specific counties. Counties also provide statistical data on participants in their Independent Living and Transitional Housing Programs.

Additionally, counties are currently required to provide statistical data via the state of California 405A form.

For FFY 2007, the data captured in the 405A form reflects positive improvements in several outcome areas for youth including:

- A 5% increase in the number of youth to whom Independent Living services were offered
- A 3% increase in the number of youth who received services
- A 10% increase in the number of youth who completed Independent Living services or a component of those services
- An 8% increase in the number of youth who completed high school, earned a GED or completed adult education
- A 19% increase in the number of youth who completed vocational or on-the-job training
- A 13% increase in the number of youth who enrolled in college

In 2006, California was one of six states chosen to participate in the National Governor's Association Policy Academy on Youth Transitioning out of Foster Care. This provided a unique opportunity for state teams to work together, with the assistance of national and state experts, to improve outcomes for youth transitioning from foster care to adulthood.

California's team was comprised of county and state leaders from multiple public systems such as child welfare, mental health, employment, education, and corrections, as well as private providers, philanthropy, youth and advocates. The team has identified three key goals:

**Permanence** - Every youth will have lifelong connections with family and supportive adults.

**Education** - Every youth will have a quality education, a high school diploma and support in pursuing post-secondary opportunities.

**Employment** - Every youth will have work experience and training opportunities that will prepare them for and place them in living wage employment and careers.

To achieve these goals, California has embarked on a "New Vision for Independent Living Program." The project focuses on redesigning the Independent Living Program by providing services and experiential training based on an individual youth's needs. The new vision will promote and support the active engagement of caregivers in identifying and assisting youth to

receive services based on individual needs as documented in their Independent Living Plan. This is being carried out through the ILP Transformation Breakthrough Series Collaborative.

The CDSS continues to implement the Transitional Housing Placement Program (THPP) and expand the Transitional Housing Placement Plus Program (THP-Plus).

For FFY 2007, the actual expenditure of federal and state funds was \$34,338,000. For SFY 2007/08, the CDSS received a federal grant of \$20,953,350 and provided \$13,434,650 in state share dollars for a total allocation of \$34,338,000 combined federal and state funds. As of March 1, 2008, expenditures for FFY 2008 are \$ 23,556,966.

**a) Help youth make the transition to self-sufficiency**

In an effort to develop protocol to enhance the youth's engagement in the transition planning process, the CDSS convened a workgroup made up of social services staff and led by county representatives to collaborate on the revision of the TILP document. The result is a new streamlined and youth-friendly document. The new document was implemented in July 2008.

The SOC 405A data is included in the state's Child Welfare Outcome and Accountability System, and therefore underwent more recent review and has been revised. The new data collection method, developed to meet federal regulations, will be used to collect data on the types of independent living services that eligible foster youth have received. The services youth have received will be entered into the CWS/CMS. The testing of this process began in July 2008; counties will be required to start entering data on October 1, 2008. At that point, counties will no longer be completing the SOC 405A.

A new form, Exit Outcomes for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care, was introduced in July 2008 to capture outcomes that are required in the Child Welfare System Improvement and Accountability Act. This form will capture data on outcomes such as educational attainment, living arrangements and health care coverage for all foster youth, including those receiving Independent Living services, as well as a question to identify whether or not foster youth emancipate from care with a lifelong connection to a committed adult. This form is completed just prior to the youth aging out of foster care.

The CDSS continues to implement THPP, which provides youth aged 16-18 with the opportunity to experience semi-supervised apartment living while receiving supportive services. For SFY 2007/08, an additional 3 counties were approved, bringing the total to 32 counties that participated in the Transitional Housing Program. For SFY 2008/09, it is anticipated that the total number of counties participating will be reduced to 28. Due to the fact that counties participating in THPP must share 30% of the cost for THPP, some counties have opted to only participate in THP-Plus, which is 100% funded by state general funds. Additionally, Counties indicated that the lack of a yearly allocation for THPP was problematic because funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis. This is one of the primary reasons some counties are opting out of THPP. Also, some counties stated that their housing need was greater for youth who had emancipated from care rather than those still in care and thus opted to provide only THP-Plus.

The THP-Plus has continued to increase. This program provides youth, aged 18 to 24, with a safe living environment while helping them to achieve self-sufficiency and learn life skills after their emancipation from the foster care system. In SFY 2007/08, an additional 26 counties were approved to participate in the THP-Plus program. This brought the total to 44 of the 58 counties participating in the program. It is projected that in SFY 2008/09, that one additional county will be participating in the THP-Plus program. Participating counties are requesting an increase in the number of beds for SFY 2008/09 to increase participation from 1,370 youth to 1,877 youth.

- CDSS is continuing its partnership with the John Burton Foundation to expand the Transitional Housing Placement Plus program (THP-Plus). The John Burton Foundation for Children Without Homes is a non-profit organization based in San Francisco, California dedicated to improving the quality of life for California's homeless children, and developing policy solutions to prevent homelessness. During FFY 2008, a Best Practices Guide for Implementing Transitional Housing was developed to help assist counties that are starting a THP-Plus.

Counties continue to provide a variety of transitional living services through collaborations with local, state, federal and private agencies. Several counties are providing Transitional Living Youth Programs through federal grants. These programs are offered in the following cities: Santa Clara, Stockton, Sacramento, San Jose, Fresno, Camarillo, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Riverside, Eureka and San Diego. In LA County's federally funded program that serves homeless young adults, program participants are required to attend ILP classes. Additionally, LA is attempting to connect every youth with a mentor by 2010. To meet this goal, LA is collaborating with the Alliance for Children's Rights which has a mentoring program for emancipated foster youth.

Alameda County collaborates with private and faith based agencies to provide emergency and short term placement for homeless youth. Additionally they are assisting 50 pregnant or parenting youth in their transitional housing program by providing them with move in stipends.

Sacramento County has encountered difficulties finding emergency shelters for emancipated youth who are homeless. The ILP social workers are reluctant to refer the youth to the local shelters because of safety issues. Many youth are reluctant to go to these shelters, where they are mixed with the chronically homeless adult population, and end up "couch surfing" or spending the nights with friends. To resolve this issue, Sacramento began collaborating with community members who provide emergency housing for emancipated homeless youth. Youth are able to share a room with another youth and they may reside there for up to two months, providing time for the youth to work with the ILP social worker to secure a more permanent housing plan.

- Some counties collaborate with private agencies to help provide employment placement opportunities for foster youth. For example, San Diego works with UPS and Sea World to provide internships or job placement for foster youth. Similarly, San Diego also collaborates with county agencies to provide employment related services for foster youth, such as their Workforce Academy for Youth program which offers a limited number of paid

internships in various county departments. Foster youth in this program are provided with a job coach and a life skills coach to help teach job and life skills that will empower the youth in finding permanent employment with the county or other agencies.

- The 2008 Annual Independent Living Program Institute entitled, “Building Solutions Together,” was held April 21-23, 2008, in Ontario, California. The Institute facilitated meetings for ILP coordinators, Transitional Housing coordinators, social workers, foster parents, mental health workers, educators and probation officers. These professionals were provided the opportunity to share with each other information on innovative programs and promising practices that promote solutions to assist in achieving positive outcomes for foster youth. In an effort to create awareness of resources available to counties the CDE presented information on the Foster Youth Services program. Additionally, workshops were specifically tailored for ILP coordinators, Transitional Housing coordinators and foster parents. This allowed participants to gain information specifically related to their field.

Workshop topics included:

- Permanency planning
- Employment
- Education
- Transitional housing
- Innovative programs

This year, the CDSS also encouraged the involvement of current foster youth in the Institute to help keep the center of focus on the youths and their needs. Youth were present in workshops and encouraged to express their opinions on the benefits and barriers to the programs and services they have received as a foster youth. One former foster youth was able to share her experiences with all the participants at the opening general session. Hearing her story first hand and having youth present at the conference was moving and the impact was evident throughout the entire conference. This resulted in a strong youth focus that carried through workshop and professional discussions.

The Department sponsors an annual Teen Forum for foster youth, ages 16-18, to provide them with an opportunity to learn more about independent living resources for housing, education, employment and foster youth rights. Youth also are provided with information on their eligibility for the Extended Medi-Cal Program that is available to them after they age out of the foster care system. The 2008 Teen Forum was held from June 26-28, 2008, on the Cal Poly Pomona campus. A total of 148 youth and sponsors attended. This number was slightly lower than last year’s forum due to county budget cuts for traveling expenses. Although there was no cost for the youth or sponsors to attend the forum, many counties that were not within driving distance of the forum could not afford the travel expenses.

This year, the Foster Club All-Stars featured participants, as well as peer leaders during the conference. The group, comprised of former foster youth, travels throughout the country and members share information about their personal experiences in an effort to improve the lives of youth in foster care. One of the Foster Club youth this year was a California former foster youth. The event is held on a different college campus each year and foster youth stay in the

campus dorms, which provides them the opportunity to experience college campuses and dorm life.

During this year's Forum, the CDSS engaged youth in the preparation planning for next year's forum. Additionally, youth were asked at the end of the forum to share what they learned and evaluate forum's helpfulness.

### **FFY 2009 Planned Activities:**

Funding for the 2009 Independent Living Program Institute will be diverted to the ILP Breakthrough Series Collaborative. However, the federally funded Teen forum will be held in June 2009 and beginning preparations are underway for the next forum.

The ILP Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) is an inter-disciplinary process focused on addressing the challenges facing foster youth who are transitioning out of care. The BSC methodology was identified as an effective approach that can help counties translate the NGA's recommendations into action. For FFY 2009 the process will include convening approximately 20 teams of public child welfare agencies and tribal representative, selected through a competitive application process, to begin work on making recommendations and implementing change in the way ILP services are provided.

The Department is convening workgroups to plan the necessary processes and procedures to implement the requirements of the Chafee National Youth in Transition Database. It is anticipated that it will take the Department at least 20 months to be ready to start collecting test data in preparation for the October 1, 2010 data collection deadline.

The new TILP document was implemented in July 2008; the department plans to evaluate the new TILP through soliciting input from county ILP programs. Additionally, a training curriculum is being developed to assist social workers in engaging youth in the development of goals that will help them succeed as they transition into adulthood.

The Department will begin collecting data from the new Exit Outcomes form and conducting preliminary analysis of the data. Additionally, counties will be provided an opportunity to identify any problems that have been encountered in using the form.

The Department plans to revise the ILP narrative form that counties must submit at the end of the fiscal year. Counties have found this form to be too cumbersome. CDSS plans to make the form more concise and specific to information needed for the Annual Progress Service Report, as well as easier for the counties to complete.

### **b) Help youth receive the education, training and services necessary to obtain employment**

### **FFY 2008 Accomplishments:**

The Foster Youth Employment and Training Taskforce continues to be a catalyst for multi-agency collaboration and partnering. The group consists of representatives from the EDD,



Workforce Investment Board, the CDSS's Community Care Licensing Division and CFSB, the US Department of Labor, the New Ways to Work Initiative (a workforce development organization), Casey Family Programs, the Community College Chancellor's office, counties, school districts, and other community based organizations. The taskforce meets every two months. Through the taskforce collaboration promising practices are identified.

A promising practice is being piloted in some counties, with Gateway programs and the help of the California Connected by 25 Initiative. San Francisco has developed an Employment Specialist and a Youth Employment Case Manager position, as well as, the development of youth-friendly "one-stops." In addition, Santa Clara County has an Employment Services Unit within their child welfare agency that is serving transitioning foster youth. This unit has been key in building the Emancipated Foster Youth County Jobs Program, which is a successful employment option (full-time/benefited county employment) for former foster youth. This program won the California State Association of Counties Challenge Award. This program allows former foster youth to apply for more than 20 job classifications with one application. This program was also deemed a "most replicable" program.

Some counties also contract out employment preparation services such as Fresno, Orange and Alameda counties' use of Workforce Investment Boards which provide youth with a variety of employment assessment tools and services. These counties also have One Stop Centers which provide opportunities for the youth to get job experience, employment and education assistance, and job placement.

San Diego launched a new youth friendly website for foster youth [www.fosteringchange.org](http://www.fosteringchange.org) that provides information on education, employment, housing, health care and parenting. The website also provides a calendar of ILP events for youth to participate in as well as information on activities within their community.

The California Department of Education (CDE) provides funding for and oversight of the Foster Youth Services program (FYS), mandated through the Education Code sections 42920–25. The primary purpose of the FYS Countywide Programs is to provide advocacy and direct services to support the educational success of all foster youth attending school in their districts. FYS has expanded from 24 county programs in 1998/99 to 57 county programs in 2007/08. FYS provides foster youth with a wide range of academic support from tutoring to school based behavioral support, as well as, vocational education and emancipation services. In 2007/08, FYS provided over 41,000 direct services to foster youth. Orange county recently revised their FYS contract to include services to foster youth ages ten and older.

A new collaborative partnership was formed between a FYS Countywide Program, the California Student Aid Commission, community colleges, universities, juvenile court community schools, health and human services agency representatives, and independent living skills contractors. They worked to create an FYS College Connection Advisory Council to increase the number of foster youths who attend post-secondary education.

A significant change to FYS programming was the inclusion of monies to serve foster youths in juvenile detention facilities. Recognizing that a correlation existed between the foster care system and juvenile justice system and a strong need to support educational services for foster youths, the Legislature included \$643,000 in the budget augmentation to expand services to foster youths in juvenile detention facilities with a strong emphasis on educational

transition services. In accordance with the expansion, the CDE released the 2006-07 RFA for the FYS Juvenile Detention program. This has resulted in the establishment of 28 FYS Juvenile Detention programs in FY 2007-08.

Two bills were introduced in the California Legislature, in early 2007, to increase employment opportunities for eligible current or former foster youth.

- Assembly Bill (AB) 121 would allow employers who receive special tax incentives to give current and former foster youth priority in hiring. This bill is now inactive.
- The introduced version of AB 671 would require that state law be amended to provide preference points on state civil service exams to current and former foster youth ages 15 to 25. This bill was gutted in its fourth amendment; it now relates to frequent users of Medi-Cal and has no reference to foster youth.

#### **FFY 2009 Planned Activities:**

The Department is working with the Foundation for California Community Colleges to provide ILP employment preparation services to eligible youth. CDSS staff will attend ILP class sessions to observe the program and identify improvements that can be made to the program.

The Department will continue to work with The Foster Youth Employment and Training Taskforce to ensure multi-agency collaboration and promotion of promising practices related to employment preparation services throughout the counties.

The Department plans to improve collaboration with the Foster Youth Services Program through annual meetings to discuss strategies for ensuring county ILP Programs are aware of the resources and services they provide.

#### **c) Help youth prepare for and enter postsecondary training and educational institutions**

#### **FFY 2008 Accomplishments:**

- The CDSS has effectively administered the Chafee Education and Training Voucher Program with the assistance of the California Student Aid Commission.

For FFY 2008, to date, 100% of the funds have been committed or expended for the Education and Training Voucher Program. CDSS has entered into a three-year contract with California Student Aid Commission allowing for the utilization of state General Funds and spends Education and Training Voucher funding over a two-year period rather than one year. The Chafee funds cannot be used to establish trust funds for youth.

The funds for ETV were not fully expended in 2007, therefore CDSS made process changes. In an effort to make program improvements the State has implemented the following changes: Grants that are unclaimed by youth are reissued to other eligible youth as a way of preventing the forfeiture of funding. The California Student Aid Commission has asked

financial aid offices to return checks to them no later than 10 business days from the initial receipt of Chafee checks in order to re-award to other eligible students expeditiously. In State Fiscal Year 2006/07, a new three-year contract became effective between Social Service and the California Student Aid Commission. The contract allows for utilization of State General Funds at the beginning of the state fiscal year, July 1, with federal funds becoming available at the beginning of the federal fiscal year, October 1. This overlapping of the release of funds will facilitate the timely receipt of grants and eliminate any hardships experienced by youth awaiting grants from federal funding. Students can access their Chafee grant information on WebGrants for Students at <https://mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov>.

Data received from the California Student Aid Commission shows, as of April 2008, that:

For FFY 2007:

- 2,812 youth received awards

For FFY 2008:

- 2,932 youth have received grants.
- The average award was \$4,031.
- The total expenditure as of March 28, 2008 is \$11,819,714.
- The total number of students that received the renewal Chafee grants was 2,219.
- The total number of students receiving the Chafee grant for the first time is 1,341.

For FFY 2009:

- The estimated number of youth who could be eligible to receive an award is 2,932. This estimate is based on the number of awards that have been processed year-to-date.

Notification of the availability of the Education and Training Voucher grants and other funding opportunities for postsecondary education is provided by counties to youth participating in Independent Living Program services. Youth also receive information about the grants via inserts in mailings from the DHCS that are sent to youth to provide information about the Former Foster Youth Extended Medi-Cal Program. Additionally, the CDSS has a contract with the EDD to disseminate information about the Education and Training Voucher and other financial aid opportunities to all eligible youth.

A best practice related to providing supports for youth in postsecondary educational settings is the Guardian Scholars Program. It is a comprehensive program that supports former foster youth in their efforts to gain a university, community college or trade school education. The program began in 1997 at California State University, Fullerton. Since then, it has grown to include 20 plus universities and community colleges in California, including San Francisco State University, University of California Santa Cruz, San Diego State University, California State University, East Bay, and Sacramento State University.

Departmental staff met with staff from the Guardian Scholars Program to gain an overview of their services. The program offers specialized counseling and financial aid services, mentoring and academic help, and year-round on-campus housing for former foster youth who qualify. In addition, the program connects these youth with supportive adults and peers who care about their well-being and have a stake in their success.

Educational liaisons continue strong advocacy efforts and educational support for foster youth. Fresno started a promising practice to base their ILP workers within high schools. Not only does the ILP worker have better and more frequent access to the youth and their educational status, this strategy has assisted greatly in building the educational institution's awareness of the needs of foster youth, the role of child welfare and ILP in the youth's life, services which are available to foster youth, and opportunities to work together to more effectively support the youth's education. Fresno ILP workers collaborate with the Office of Education through monthly meetings regarding educational services for youth in care. This is to ensure compliance with AB 490 and that the educational rights and needs of the youth are being met.

In June 2008 flyers were sent out to ILP eligible youth between the ages of 16 and 18 informing them of ILP eligibility and available services. The information was expanded to include ETV and Transitional Housing.

#### **FFY 2009 Planned Activities:**

The Department plans to expand outreach to ILP eligible youth by sending informational flyers to high schools throughout the state containing information on both ILP services and ETV grants.

The Department is working with the Guardian Scholars Program to expand their program to include on campus summer housing for students who are former foster youth.

#### **d) Provide personal and emotional support to youth through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults**

The CDSS continues to work on the provisions of Assembly Bill 1412 (Chapter 640, Statutes of 2005). This legislation created a phased-in expansion of requirements that county social workers ask children ten years of age or older, beginning with those children placed with a non-relative, about important adult relationships and to make efforts to support those relationships. The court is required to determine whether the agency has made reasonable efforts to maintain the child's relationships with individuals other than the child's siblings who are important to the child, consistent with the child's best interests. The CDSS is also required to encourage counties to develop approaches to ensure that no youth leaves care without a lifelong connection to a committed adult. Many counties include individuals, who have been identified by youth as significant in conferences during which emancipation plans are discussed and agreed to by the youth and the supportive individuals in his or her life. This bill also allows foster children aged 12-years and older to review, sign and be given a copy of their own case plan.

The new TILP now includes a place to identify the adults that are helping youth to achieve their goals. Caregivers are also asked to sign the TILP to include them in the development of the youth's goals.

The new form, Exit Outcomes for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care, includes a question to identify whether or not a foster youth emancipates from care with a lifelong connection to a committed adult. This information will help to identify if gaps exist in the practice of identifying lifelong supports for foster youth as mandated in AB 1412 (Chaptered 10/17/2005). This will enable the CDSS and counties to identify if there are any systemic gaps in the practice of connecting youth to committed adults. However, the bill targets foster youth ages ten and older. Since the bill has been in effect for less than three years, it is highly unlikely that the department will be able to identify systematic gaps in connecting youth to an adult for at least another three years, as we will not have baseline data from the Exit Outcomes from for another year and we will not see the effects on the 10-12 year olds for another four to six years.

The "Family Finders" service has been identified as a promising practice to assist youth to connect with family members with whom the youth has lost contact. Due to the cost related to utilizing the technology developed by US Search, the CDSS and counties are examining ways of implementing methods for assisting youth through other methods. Santa Clara County created a unit of social workers dedicated to finding families for foster children and youth. A workshop was presented on the practice of family finding at the ILP Institute.

Shasta County has embarked on a promising practice for establishing enduring relationships for youth transitioning from care to emancipation. Long term, one-to-one relationships are established beginning at the age of 16 when a caseworker is assigned to each youth. Each case worker serves as a mentor to assist youth in establishing their transition plan and assist the youth in planning their short- and long-term goals. On an as-needed basis, the caseworkers help youth to cope with personal problems that arise; each youth is given the cell phone numbers of two or more caseworkers who can help them when they need it.

Merced County has recently revamped their ILP program to include services for foster youth ages 14-16. They have begun a program called Friday Night Fun which meets twice a month and provides an opportunity for youth to gather together and work on developing communication skills and building self-esteem. Additionally, Merced implemented the Transitional Housing Program Plus

Imperial County took a unique approach to sensitivity training by having former foster youth co-lead the trainings which were presented to new Social Workers, Foster Parents and other community members, such as teachers and counselors, who provide direct services to foster youth.

#### **FFY 2009 Planned Activities:**

Begin collecting data on youths' permanent connections to committed adults from the Exit Outcomes from.

CDSS plans to add a question on the narrative report to identify the practices counties are using to ensure that foster youth exit care with a permanent connection to a committed adult

On July 1, 2008, Orange County will begin requiring foster care providers to attend ILP workshops with the foster youth they serve at a minimum of one time per month. The life

skills learned by the participating youth and witnessed by their foster care providers in the workshops will be practiced in the foster care placements, until such time as the foster care providers certify that the foster youth have mastered that life skill.

**e) Provide services such as financial, housing, counseling, employment, education and other appropriate support and services for former foster care recipients between 18 years of age and up to the day before their 21st birthday:**

**FFY 2008 Accomplishments:**

Counties continue to provide aftercare services to emancipated youth aged 18 up to the day prior to their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.

The youth continue to receive information on a wide range of successful daily living skills:

- Employment skills.
- Health, safety, and hygiene.
- Banking, money management, and budgeting.
- Consumer purchasing, loans, and contracts.
- Obtaining housing and home maintenance.
- Interpersonal skills.
- Knowledge of community resources.

The California Connected by 25 Initiative was developed to help address the needs of youth during the transition from the foster care system to adulthood. Participating counties collaborate with other agencies to ensure referral of youth to Connected by 25 programs and services. Santa Clara has recently determined that the Connected by 25 programs and services have touched the lives of at least 400 youth in their county during the past year.

Each year in California, approximately 4,200 youth age out of foster care at age 18 or 19. Of this total, two-out-of-three have an "imminent housing need." The housing needs of all emancipated youth increase yearly as additional youth leave foster care. In contrast, federal funding for the ILP has decreased yearly resulting in counties having to stretch their Chafee allocation further in order to provide a variety of services to emancipated youth in their counties.

The actual expenditure of the Chafee Room and Board funding for FFY 2008 was \$3,785,725. Twenty counties reported utilizing the 30% allowance for assisting former foster youth with housing related costs. The state remains well within the limit for use of these funds as only 9.5% of the state's allocation was spent.

In 2001, California passed AB 427 (Chapter 125, Statutes of 2001) that created THP-Plus. This program is funded with 100% state General Fund dollars. This program allows counties to utilize state General Funds to provide more housing options to emancipated youth while enabling them to spend their federal Chafee fund for other much needed ILP services, which may explain why only 9.5% of the funding is used for room and board.

The THP-Plus was established to provide safe, affordable housing and supportive services to emancipated foster youth through the age of 21. Legislation that was passed in 2005, (AB 824 [Chapter 636, Statutes of 2005]), extends the maximum age for the receipt of THP-Plus services to youth aged up to 24 years.

Counties are also required to report on the services they offer to homeless, pregnant and/or parenting foster youth. Counties report collaborating with other human services agencies, community agencies and faith based programs to provide homeless youth with temporary housing, such as a hotel or homeless shelter, until they are able to transition into stable housing. It appears that counties are able to provide housing for pregnant and parenting youth primarily through THP-Plus. Counties without THP-Plus programs refer youth to other agencies that can provide services or to other county THP-Plus programs if the youth are interested in relocating to a neighboring county.

The California Connected by 25 Initiative provides assistance to participating counties in implementing or expanding their THP-Plus programs. As a result of receiving assistance from California Connected by 25, Santa Clara now provides 80 youth with stable transitional housing. Santa Clara also developed an innovative agreement with the San Jose State University Housing Services for foster youth attending the University. Fresno, Stanislaus and San Francisco also led with innovations in transitional housing by starting up a host family model of transitional housing that integrates a permanency focus.

Senate Bill 436 (Chapter 629, Statutes of 2005) requires counties to report on the housing resources available to parenting and pregnant youth. Counties are required to include in their reports information about increased services to this population of youth.

Emancipated Youth Stipends are 100% state General Fund allocation to counties. The Emancipated Youth Stipends are allocated to counties based on the number of ILP-eligible youth in care. \$3.6 million is allocated to the program. Counties utilize the funds for the emergency needs of youth such as rental deposits, minor medical emergencies, and transportation.

The state utilizes the option to provide extended Medi-Cal coverage to youth aged 18 to 20 who emancipated from foster care. Each year California has approximately 4,200 youth that age out of foster care. In order to receive federal funds for extending Medi-Cal benefits to these youth, counties are required annually to determine the youth's eligibility by verifying the following:

- The youth's consent to continue with the Medi-Cal services.
- The youth's current address.
- When a third-party health insurance is involved, Medi-Cal seeks reimbursement from the third party. If applicable, a youth's health insurance must be reported to the eligibility worker.

At this time, enrollment in the extended Medi-Cal program is not uniformly automatic throughout the state. According to the DHCS, as of October 2007 an average of 5,408

youths a month (from July 2006 – July 2007) were recipients of extended Medi-Cal benefits. In July 2007 approximately 5,742 youth were receiving extended Medi-Cal benefits.

Senate Bill (SB) 1132 was introduced into the California Legislature in January 2008. This bill attempts to make enrollment in Medi-Cal automatic for foster youth, who emancipate from the system, until their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. Although this bill continues through the legislative process, if enacted, federal regulations mandating a yearly redetermination of eligibility would not allow for implementation of the bill. At this time, the Department of Health Services, does not intend to make any changes in their process for determining former foster youths' eligibility for extended Medi-Cal.

### **FFY 2009 Planned Activities:**

The Department plans to convene workgroups to identify strategies to help counties maintain contact with youth once they emancipate from foster care so they do not lose their extended Medi-Cal eligibility. Former foster youth are a mobile population, which creates a barrier that has been encountered in ensuring that former foster youth maintain their extended Medi-Cal is locating them annually to verify their consent and residency.

The Department also plans to examine the differences in counties' processes for verification of former foster youth's eligibility for extended Medi Cal to highlight successful practices and identify gaps in order to make recommendations of effective practices to counties.

Orange County has submitted a THP-PLUS plan that will begin providing a Scattered-Site Apartment component with multiple providers on July 1, 2008 and a Single-site Family Campus component which will begin on April 1, 2009. Fresno County has implemented the use of the host family model with the THP-Plus plan and intends to expand its program to provide the Scattered-Site Apartment component.

CDSS is working with the Food Stamps program to create a streamlined form for foster youth to complete prior to emancipation to enable them to have food stamp benefits when they exit care.

## **2. Briefly describe how the Independent Living Program is served by political subdivisions in the State.**

CDSS actively collaborates with other state of California Departments, such as the CDE, the DHCS, the EDD, counties, the Community College Chancellors Office, California State University, Sacramento and University of California at Berkeley. The state consistently encourages youth participation to inform public policy through the California Youth Connection, as well as, youth representatives referred to the state by counties and foster youth alumni employed with the CDSS' Ombudsman's Office. In addition, the CDSS collaborates with statewide initiatives that are focusing on meeting the needs of youth who are aging-out from foster care into adulthood.

The Youth Transition Action Team Initiative focuses on bringing together the resources of the workforce, education and child welfare systems to better prepare adolescents who are aging out of foster care. It also provides technical assistance, training and support for county-based



teams of leaders from child welfare, education, workforce development, social services, philanthropy, and other systems in their efforts to leverage local resources and programs to provide an integrated continuum of services and opportunities for current and former foster youth as they seek to make the transition to life on their own.

The teams are comprised of community leaders from child welfare, education, workforce development, juvenile justice as well as the philanthropic community.

Teams meet in their respective counties to identify and leverage the current approaches, strategies and resources in place to ensure successful transitions to adulthood. Additionally, each team is charged with assisting its respective county in achieving their child welfare system enhancement goals, particularly in the area of youth permanency.

During 2007, the Youth Transition Action Team expanded its collaboration with counties by adding 6 new counties to its Team. The Team worked with a total of 18 California Counties to create a comprehensive, integrated and sequenced set of services and supports to improve the likelihood that youth in the child welfare system will be prepared and ready to achieve success as adults. Teams participated in the Foster Youth Focus Series, a three-part series that resulted in the development of four policy focus areas that became the framework for the Foster Youth Career Development and Employment Summit that took place in January 2008. Participation at the summit consisted of nearly 300 foster youth, former foster youth, caretakers, community based organizations, employers and professionals from child welfare, workforce development, education, and probation from across California. Participants came together to address employment and career development issues and forge solutions for the nearly 85,000 youth in foster care in California. There were 48 counties represented at the summit. An evaluation protocol and tool has been developed and is in process to gauge the Youth Transition Action Team systems impacts on serving youth at the local level. Outcome measures include several indicators of systems collaboration, leadership, scope of partnership, measurement systems, and youth centered focus.

### **California Connected by 25 Initiative**

The California Connected by 25 Initiative, sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, was developed to help address the needs of youth during the transition from the foster care system to adulthood. The goal of the initiative is that “through positive youth development and integrated systems of support and services, transitioning foster youth are connected by age 25 to the opportunities, experiences and support that will enable them to succeed throughout adulthood.” The initiative is being developed to assist county child welfare agencies and their communities to build a comprehensive continuum of supports and services across seven key focus areas:

- K-12 Education.
- Employment/Job Training/Postsecondary Education.
- Housing.
- Independent Living Skills Program.
- Financial Competency, Savings and Assets.

- Personal/Social Asset Development.
- Permanency.

Six counties are currently participating in the initiative with two more counties preparing to join in 2008. Counties are also implementing the following Connected by 25 “strategies for success,” as these are important foundational core beliefs in their work:

- Youth as Leaders for Change and Decision-Makers in their Lives.
- Child Welfare Agencies and Communities as Invested Partners in Change.
- Caregivers as Transition Teachers and Partners.

All California Connected by 25 Initiative counties are increasing their capacity for data collection and self-evaluation of their transition-aged youth systems by implementing the Connected by 25 outcomes framework developed with the assistance of UC Berkeley's Center for Social Services Research. On-going technical assistance and twice-yearly convenings arranged by California Social Work Education Center, at the University of California at Berkeley, are important to successful Connected by 25 implementation. The assistance helps counties to address barriers, develop innovative programs, implement work plans and achieve benchmarks.

Participating counties invite youth to the discussion table more frequently than non-participating counties, and agencies are working to ensure that child welfare, probation, and/or ILP have integrated referral of youth to Connected by 25 programs and services in their everyday practice. Santa Clara has recently determined that Connected by 25 programs and services have touched the lives of at least 400 youth in their county during the past year.

Educational liaisons continue strong advocacy efforts and educational support for foster youth. Fresno started a promising practice to base their ILP workers within high schools. Not only does the ILP worker have better and more frequent access to the youth and their educational status, this strategy has assisted greatly in building the educational institution's awareness of the needs of foster youth, the role of child welfare and ILP in the youth's life, services which are available to foster youth, and opportunities to work together to more effectively support the youth's education.

**3) Describe how youth of various ages and at various stages of achieving independence, are to be served, particularly with regard to services for 1) youth under 16, (2) youth 16-18, and (3) youth at least 18 years of age that have not yet attained their 21st birthday.**

The CDSS convened a workgroup that is addressing the needs of youth in foster care placements and group homes. The work group is currently reviewing and drafting regulations to ensure that licensing requirements for foster family homes promote a “normal childhood” experience in a home-like environment, encourage the self-reliance and independence of youth who are leaving foster care, as well as promoting the health, safety and wellbeing outcomes.

The ILP regulations reinforce that counties may serve youth under 16 at county option. Los Angeles County has served youth aged 14 and older for many years and continues to offer services to this age group. Fresno and Merced counties have also begun including services for youth at age 14.

The ILP regulations require that counties offer core ILP services to this age group, including education/career counseling, employment services, life skills training, housing, and mentoring opportunities. Services are designed to meet the individual needs of youth based on the ILP.

The ILP services to youth at least 18 years of age and who have not yet attained their 21st birthday, focus on providing youth with postsecondary education information and referrals, transitional housing opportunities, employment assistance, mentoring and Medi-Cal services.

Effective October 2000, California enacted legislation that extended Medicaid services to eligible emancipating foster youth up to age 21.

**4) Describe how the State involves the public and private non-profit sectors in helping adolescents in foster care achieve independence.**

Collaboration with the public and private non-profit sectors is a core value for the CDSS. All major initiatives have actively involved other state agencies, counties, state/local educational institutions, foundations and non-profits. The Foster Youth Employment, Training and Housing Taskforce and the Youth Transition Action Teams mentioned previously in this report are examples of current efforts.

On March 14, 2007, CDSS signed a historic agreement with the Karuk Tribe, located in northwestern California, to independently provide funding for services including foster care, independent living, and adoption assistance programs. The CDSS is now working to develop similar agreements with other California Tribes. A tribal representative reviewed the APSR, but did not provide any comments or feedback.

The CDSS is working to increase its outreach to state tribal leaders to inform them of the ILP services available to tribal foster youth. To better learn how ILP services can meet the unique needs of tribal foster youth, staff members of the CDSS's Foster Care Support Services Bureau are now members of the Department's ICWA Workgroup. The workgroup is comprised of tribal representatives, ICWA experts from throughout the state, and CDSS staff. The CDSS is in the process of ensuring tribal representation at the monthly CWDA, ILP Coordinators' Subcommittee meetings to ensure full access to ILP benefits and services to transition-aged tribal foster youth.

The CDSS continues to collaborate with Tribal STAR (Successful Transitions to Adult Readiness) regarding Independent Living Program policies and outreach to California tribes. The intent of Tribal STAR is to ensure that Native foster youth are connected to culture, community and resources as they successfully transition to adulthood. The program provides interdisciplinary training for providers who work with Native foster youth. In addition, communities are offered technical assistance to aid them as they work to build

collaborative relationships and implement the training. Years one and two of this five-year program focused on developing a curriculum and providing training for supervisors and frontline workers in southern California to enhance their competency in working with Native foster youth. During years four and five statewide training was provided with ongoing technical assistance provided to the communities that were trained in years two and three. Year five is currently devoted to training MSW students throughout the state as well as county staff on the needs of tribal foster youth.

As a promising practice for the State, Tribal STAR has provided several training sessions to staff from various counties around the state on techniques to use when presenting information and instruction regarding the needs of tribal foster youth. This training addressed how best to lead cross-cultural discussions that result in positive outcomes for tribal foster youth. It focuses on goals for tribal youth, their interests, what Independent Living Program supports and services are available to them and what the challenges are in providing these services.

The training by Tribal STAR consultants in partnership with tribal representatives, have resulted in the provision of Independent Living Program services on the Rincon Reservation in San Diego County.

In the Annual ILP Narrative Report and Plan, counties are required to report on the provision of services to tribal youth. Counties report that when a tribal youth is identified, an ICWA coordinator or a tribal representative is contacted to confirm tribal membership and to provide the youth with access to any specialized services available. Most counties report having received training in providing culturally sensitive services to tribal youth. San Diego County, which provides services a larger population of tribal youth, has an Indian Specialty Unit within their Child Welfare Services Division. Counties report that tribal youth receive the same services as all eligible youth. Counties with higher populations of tribal foster youth report that they work with the county ICWA worker to assist in connecting youth to tribal leaders/members. Some counties work with specific organizations such as Indian health clinics and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. We are currently working to increase the number of counties working directly with tribes through the ILP participation on the ICWA workgroup. Additionally, tribal representatives have been invited and are now participating in subcommittee meetings held by the County Welfare Director's Association, County Independent Living Program Managers and Department staff.

CDSS makes efforts to include former foster youth in process and planning activities. Youth were engaged in the CFSR process in four ways: 1) members of the Statewide Assessment Team; 2) CDSS sponsored four focus groups statewide to gather feedback from youth on their perceptions/assessment of child welfare services in CA; 3) specific stakeholder interview groups were convened at the state and local level during the week long onsite reviews; and 4) youth are members of the CFSR Steering Committee. Additionally, youth from the California Youth Connection meet routinely with the Director of Social Services; former foster youth are on the Child Welfare Council and they are involved in planning the annual teen forum.

**5) Describe the objective criteria the State uses for determining eligibility for Independent Living Program benefits and services, including the process for developing the criteria.**

Youth who are eligible to receive ILP services are those youth whose placement meets the federal definition of foster care: "24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the State agency has placement and care responsibility." Youth who are or were 16 years of age, and expected to remain in care up to the age of 18 are eligible for services. In addition, youth who were 16 years of age up to 18 years of age and in receipt of Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment Program funds are eligible for ILP services.

Once eligibility has been determined, ILP participants are individually assessed on their needs in conjunction with the development of the Independent Living Program. The Independent Living Program is updated every six months or sooner, if necessary. In accordance with Welfare and Institutions Code section 11375, any child in receipt of Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program benefits is eligible to receive ILP services. California maintains state funding of ILP services, in addition to federal ILP funding, in order to meet this need. However, these funds are not included in the state funds that are used as a federal match.

**6) Describe how the State ensures fair and equitable treatment of benefit recipients.**

The ILP regulations are the primary means of ensuring fair and equitable treatment of ILP recipients. California is a county-administered state and as such the provision of the array of services is based on geography, local resources, and the individual needs of youth.

**7) Public Comments**

Recipients of the Proposed State Plan:

- All County Independent Living Program Coordinators
- Executive Director, the County Welfare Directors Association
- Executive Director, the California Probation Officers Association
- Director, the Community College Foundation
- Foster Youth Services Program Coordinator, Educational Options Office, California Department of Education
- Chief, Program Support Branch, California Department of Health Services
- President, the California Foster Parent Association
- President, the California State Care Providers Association
- Executive Director, the California Youth Connection
- Tribal representatives

## **Annual Budget Request & Summary**

Placeholder for Budget info

Placeholder for Budget info



Placeholder for Budget info

Placeholder for Budget info

## **Disaster Plan**

## DISASTER PLAN

The state of California's Office of Emergency Services' Emergency Plan (Part Two Attachment A, B and C) incorporates the CDSS in their overall disaster plan. The plan can be viewed at the following website:

<http://www.oes.ca.gov/Operational/OESHome.nsf/LevelTwoWithNav?OpenForm&Key=Plans+and+Publications>

In addition to the state's emergency plan, the CDSS' Disaster Services Section is responsible for supporting counties' mass care and shelter programs in California, and state and federal grant recovery programs for individuals and households. These program responsibilities are delegated to the CDSS by an Administrative Order from the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, issued under the authority of Executive Order W-9-91.

The CDSS issued an All County Letter (ACL 07-30) informing all 58 counties of new federal disaster response requirements. The ACL established that counties are required to incorporate the new federal requirements within their local child welfare plans by September 28, 2007.

As of May 20, 2008, the CDSS has received all 58 county CWS Disaster Response Plans.

All county plans include the following new federal requirements on how states would:

- (A) Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children under state care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster;
- (B) Respond, as appropriate, to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those cases;
- (C) Remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster;
- (D) Preserve essential program records; and
- (E) Coordinate services and share information with other states.

The CDSS will request an annual updated plan from each county.

On October 23, 2007 and January 5-7, 2008, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger declared a state of emergency in several CWS counties due to extreme fires and winter storms. During this time the CDSS maintained communication (via email and telephone) with all affected counties to insure the safety of children in the child welfare system were being met and to offer assistance if needed.

A post wildfire disaster meeting was held on January 16, 2008. Discussions included state and county debrief of the experience from the fire disaster, lessons learned, and identifying the next steps.

The CDSS also continues to develop and work towards a comprehensive, department wide disaster response plan that will incorporate all 58 county CWS emergency response plans. Efforts will include integration with other departmental programs, protocols and emergency

response teams. Efforts will also include the use of a toll free number that counties could access in the event of an emergency.

The CDSS maintains an electronic and paper copy of all CWS Disaster Response Plans. All county plans are currently on the CDSS' website located at <http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/default.htm>. This will enable viewing access to all counties.

The Departmental contact is Frank Sanchez, Bureau Chief – Adoptions Services Bureau. Mr. Sanchez can be reached at the California Department of Social Services, 744 P Street, MS 3-31, Sacramento, CA 95814-5512 or at 916-651-8089. An alternate contact is Patricia Roth, Manager - Adoptions Services Bureau. Ms. Roth can be reached at the California Department of Social Services, 744 P Street MS 3-31, Sacramento, CA 95814-5512 or at 916-651-8089.

## **California's Collaboration with the Courts in the Implementation of the Child and Family Services Plan**

## **CALIFORNIA'S COLLABORATION WITH THE COURTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PLAN**

The CFSD of the CDSS plays a vital role in the development of policies and programs that implement the goals of CDSS' mission. In developing policies and programs, the CFSD collaborates with other state and local agencies, tribal representatives, foster/kinship caregivers, foster youth, foster care service providers, community-based organizations, the Judicial Council, researchers, child advocates, the Legislature and private foundations to maximize families' opportunities for success. This section will discuss CDSS' numerous collaboration efforts with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), the staff agency of the Judicial Council, which has policy-making authority over the state court system.

The AOC is based in San Francisco and maintains three regional offices. Chief Justice Ronald M. George serves as chair of the Judicial Council. William C. Vickrey is the Administrative Director of the Courts, and Ronald G. Overholt is the Chief Deputy Director. Under the direction of the Chief Justice and the council, the AOC serves the courts for the benefit of all Californians by advancing excellence, leadership, and service in the administration of justice. The AOC also serves as a major source of input for the Judicial Council's strategic planning efforts.

There are several interagency teams, commissions or other efforts that include both CDSS and the AOC. One important team that addresses a multitude of issues is the SIT. Not only has the SIT continued to increase the number of agencies participating, it has also continued to work on a variety of issues that impact children and families. The SIT is chaired by the CDSS, and is comprised of representatives overseeing programs effecting children from departments within the California Health and Human Services Agency (CHHS), such as the DHCS, the CDPH, the DMH, the ADP and the California DDS. In addition to those agencies, the DOE, the EDD, the California First 5 Commission, the California Workforce Investment Board, the DOJ, the Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), Office of the Chancellor for California Community Colleges, and the Foundation Consortium also participated.

The SIT priority work plan objectives for years 2007-08, which involve collaboration with the AOC/Judicial Council. These include decrease racial disproportionality and disparities in outcomes across systems with a focus on CWS; sharing data across systems; improve access to AOD services by families in the child welfare system; and to overcome real and perceived legal barriers to sharing "confidential" client information in order to strengthen services.

### **SIT Work Groups**

**California Statewide Leadership Group on the Co-occurrence of Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment** (Leadership Group - formerly known as the Greenbook Project) is a voluntary affiliation of representatives of state and county government and nonprofit agencies representing child welfare, the courts, domestic violence service providers, and related domains including substance abuse, health and mental health, and child abuse prevention, that work with vulnerable families. In its role as a working group of the State Interagency Team on Children and Families (SIT), the Leadership Group will develop findings and

recommendations to the SIT, among other policymakers and constituency groups. The Leadership Group mission is to ensure that all agencies and community-based groups are working together to make available the most appropriate protection, supports and services to ensure that vulnerable families are not re-victimized by social services, the courts, or the domestic violence agencies designed to serve their interests.

To achieve its mission, the Leadership Group's goal is to identify, define and advance changes needed to support practices that foster the safety and well-being of all members of vulnerable families and their children. Under review are state policy and regulation and other state-level tools, such as data collection, education, professional development and funding.

Objectives include:

- Stimulating the inclusion of issues surrounding co-occurrence and the best approaches to addressing it into professional development opportunities for judicial, child welfare and domestic violence agency and law enforcement personnel and other state and local organizations that work with these families.
- Creating partnerships across state and county agencies and nonprofit organizations, including those that represent child welfare, domestic violence, law enforcement, judicial, and other arenas that work with families with co-occurring domestic violence and child maltreatment.
- Augmenting the technical assistance tools available to state agencies to work with county and local officials and front-line workers.
- Exploring opportunities to test alternative models of judicial, social services, domestic violence, law enforcement and community interaction.

Currently, these objectives are unfunded, but the Leadership Group anticipates increased community involvement and collaboration.

**The Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Workgroup** is comprised of representatives from the Departments of Alcohol and Drug Programs, Health Services, Mental Health, CDSS, Education, Developmental Services, Judicial Council and California's First 5 Commission. In 2006, the Work Group results included improving the collection of data on substance abuse by families in the child welfare, health and education systems; and assisting counties in estimating substance abuse treatment needs for child welfare families. They also developed a county survey of AOD screening protocols and tools to determine promising practices and recommendations for improving screening and referral. This survey was presented to the SIT in June 2007. In October 2007, the counties and regional offices that participated in the survey were notified how the survey summary was to be used and how to keep the SIT informed regarding the implementation of the recommendations. Key accomplishments include:

- Agreement on common terms to define AOD Screening.
- ADP incorporated Student Assistance Programs (SAPs) in its Safe and Drug Free Schools grants.
- CDE distributed information regarding the February SAP Conference to AOD Work Group agencies to encourage their participation.
- CDSS is including two AOD screening workshops at the CalWORKS Summit.



- ADP solicited Work Group Member agencies to promote the services provided through their systems at the 2008 ADP Conference.
- ADP is making technical assistance contractors available to other systems to provide training for AOD screening.

**The Work Group to Eliminate Disparities** is comprised of representatives from the Departments of Alcohol and Drug Program, Health Services, Mental Health, CDSS, Education, Developmental Services, Judicial Council and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Their focus for 2008 is addressing racial disproportionality in CWS through their participation as the state level team in the California Disproportionality Project, which is co-sponsored by the CDSS, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and Casey Family Programs through the California Co-Investment Partnership. This initiative was launched in June with the call for applications. In addition to the state level team, up to 14 county CWS agencies and their community and interagency partners will participate. As the state level team, the Work Group will develop recommendations to the SIT for policy, practice and cross system changes to reduce the disproportionate representation of children of color in the CWS, as well as to improve outcomes for children and families of color across the state of California.

In October 2007, the *Eliminating Disproportionality and Disparities: CA Disproportionality Project and Family to Family Key Elements & Rating Tool* was drafted and piloted. The tool was finalized in November 2007.

**The Core Indicator Workgroup** has been charged with developing a state enriched core set of indicators of child and family well-being for the California Outcomes and Accountability System. This includes recommendations for the potential use of outcome data from systems other than child welfare, such as health, education, substance abuse treatment, etc. The CDSS is leading the workgroup, and the Departments of Health Services, Mental Health, Education, Developmental Services, and Alcohol and Drug Programs and the Judicial Council are participating.

Cross agency indicators will encourage shared accountability for improved outcomes for shared populations. Since various data systems have not been designed to produce outcomes data or to transfer data easily across systems this is a long-term effort, which presents both opportunities and challenges. In 2006 the CDSS, through their contract with the University of California, Davis, completed an analysis of relevant SIT member agencies' key outcomes, indicator and data systems. With the assistance of appropriate staff from those agencies, the potential for using the data for the Outcomes and Accountability System was discussed, and recommendations were identified, developed and prioritized recommendations to the SIT and were pursued during the remainder of 2007.

#### 2007 Accomplishments

- CDMH collaboration with local probation chiefs in the development of prevention and early intervention guidance materials to reflect the mental health needs of minors involved with local probation departments.
- CWDA and CMHDA cross training activities that highlights the federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) challenges and identifies potential local MH programs serving children, youth and families in the child welfare system.

- CDMH and CDSS coordination is ensuring that all necessary P&EI training and orientation is provided to local program managers.

### 2008 Challenges and Opportunities

The SIT highlighted the Challenges and Opportunities they see in 2008 and commented that opportunities often emerge from challenges. Several themes appeared in this discussion:

- Diminishing resources, program and service cuts coupled with the ongoing need for services for vulnerable families reinforce the continued importance of coordinating and integrating services; supporting interdepartmental collaboration; and, strengthening workforce development to maximize resources and meet service demands.
- Transition age youth services need to be better coordinated within and across agencies to avoid duplication and make the best use of resources.
- Client level information sharing to improve services requires the investment of resources, expertise and a commitment to overcome barriers associated with confidentiality.
- Information systems improvements currently underway in the Courts, CDSS and other state agencies provide the opportunity to ensure that systems are designed to facilitate data sharing.
- AOD abuse is a crosscutting issue that impacts outcomes in health, mental health, child welfare and education and needs to continue to be tackled.
- Multiple treatment plans for children, youth and families that are served by more than one agency are confusing and counterproductive.
- Leadership support and a multidisciplinary approach are needed to overcome delays in implementing pre release plans and coordinating reentry programs for youth exiting the state corrections system.
- Succession planning is essential to ensure sustainability of leadership, ongoing efforts and accomplishments during leadership and staff transition.
- Efforts by a number of groups, i.e. Child Welfare Council, Blue Ribbon Commission of Foster Care, Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership, that are focusing on improving child welfare systems provides the opportunity to coordinate and leverage efforts.

The Work Group Leads reported the following Challenges and Opportunities related to achieving the Work Plan Deliverables:

- Changes in program funding, directives and priorities, which challenge interagency coordination. Some changes result in opportunities while others created barriers.
- Work Group members developed good working relationships, learned about the services and programs provided by other agencies and opportunities for collaboration beyond the Work Group focus.
- Unanticipated complexity and work load associated with activities needed to produce Deliverables.
- Work Group member turnover and time limitations of department staff.
- Delays associated with bureaucratic processes.

### **Blue Ribbon Commission of Children in Foster Care**

The Commission began meeting in 2006 to begin a study of one of the most critical issues facing the justice system – the need to quickly secure safe and permanent homes for

California's children. Appointed by Chief Justice Ronald M. George, the representative Commission, chaired by Associate Supreme Court Justice Carlos R. Moreno, is made up of judges (including a tribal judge), legislators, attorneys, representatives from CDSS, county social services and probation representatives, former foster youth, community leaders and others. They are exploring the causes and consequences of court-based delays and are in the process of developing recommendations to the Judicial Council on how to improve the ability of courts to move children quickly out of foster care and into permanency. An update of their activities this year is contained in the Permanency section. Over the past year, the Commission continued to work closely with representatives from CDSS and the Center for Social Services Research to draft quantitative performance measures for the juvenile court. The Commission released draft recommendations for public comment in March 2008 and will present final recommendations to the Judicial Council in August 2008.

### **ICWA Initiative**

The ICWA team collaborates with the Native American Indian tribes located in California, the CDSS, and the DOJ by participating in both the ICWA Work Group that is convened by CDSS and the ICWA Compliance Work Group that is convened by the DOJ, Office of the Attorney General.

The ICWA Initiative promotes full compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act by:

- Fostering collaboration.
- Providing education.
- Serving as a clearinghouse of resources on ICWA.
- Providing technical assistance.

The educational offerings consist of a range of cross disciplinary trainings that are tailored to the needs of the local court system or region. These have included regional conferences, individual workshops at statewide conferences such as those convened by the AOC (e.g., judicial colleges, Beyond the Bench), the CDSS (e.g., that agency's annual statewide ICWA conference), the DOJ (e.g., the Attorney General's Trial and State Justice Summit), and national organizations (for example, ACF's State and Tribes Annual Conference and the National ICWA's annual conference).

Some of the highlights of the educational workshops include:

- October 4, 2007, a training in Alameda County.
- October 25, 2007, a training at the Los Angeles Partnership Conference.
- January 16, 2008, a training in Tehama County.
- January 28, 2008, an ICWA presentation at the Chadwick Conference in San Diego.
- January 31, 2008, conducted a training in conjunction with the Permanency Planning. for Foster Youth in Care workshop.
- February 15, 2008, participated in an ICWA training in Humboldt County.
- February 25 and 27, 2008, conducted trainings mainly for probation officers in Monterey County.
- March 11, 2008, conducted an ICWA training in San Bernardino County.

- April 2, 2008, the AOC is organizing and developing the content of an Advanced ICWA – Detailed Provisions of the Indian Child Welfare Act for April of 2008 Training for Los Angeles County Probation placement officers.
- April 14, 2008, training for Santa Clara probation.
- April 21 and 30, 2008, training for self-help attorneys in San Francisco and Sacramento.
- April 23 and 24, 2008, an ICWA broadcast for court clerks and court personnel.
- May, 12, 2008, an ICWA collaborative training in Mendocino County (Ukiah).
- May 29, 2008, an ICWA session for rural judges at the Cow County Institute in Lake Tahoe.
- June 5, 2008, an ICWA session at a Dependency Representation Administration Funding and Training (DRAFT) regional training (for three eastern sierra counties).
- Summer 2008, training (tentative) in San Francisco for probation.

The ICWA Initiative also has a statewide impact in four ways:

- Ensuring quality legal services on ICWA through the publication of legal reference guides, which includes a judicial handbook, statewide rules and forms, and training materials for all court system stakeholders.  
<http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/programs/description/jrta-ICWAResources.htm>
  - ICWA History and Context.
  - ICWA Laws, Regulations, and Rules and Forms.
  - Bench Handbook: The Indian Child Welfare Act.
  - ICWA Job Aids for State Courts and Agencies.
  - Frequently Asked Questions.
- Raising awareness of the many culturally specific Native American resources available in California by maintaining an up-to-date list of those resources online (see [www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/programs/description/jrta-ICWAResources.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/programs/description/jrta-ICWAResources.htm)).
- Promoting promising local practices, such as local court-tribal collaborations.
- Maintaining on-line a list of ICWA expert witnesses (see Tab A and [www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/pdffiles/ICWA-CA-WITNESSES.pdf](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/pdffiles/ICWA-CA-WITNESSES.pdf)).

The ICWA team also provides technical assistance to CDSS, local courts, attorneys, social workers, and probation officers on legal questions of ICWA implementation. The type of technical assistance ranges from:

- Following-up with local court system participants attending collaborative meetings.
- Answering legal and non-legal questions relating to ICWA.
- Providing assistance on how to implement the self-assessment process.
- Providing assistance on how to make changes based on the self-assessment.
- Convening and/or facilitating collaborative meetings where ICWA policy and practice issues can be discussed and resolved at the local level by court, county, and tribal representatives.
- Developing and providing legal training tools.

- Referring to local tribal resources.
- Identifying experts for local and regional trainings.

Some of the technical assistance provided included assistance consultation with CDSS on its All County Letter, Los Angeles County Probation Department on its local protocol, and proposing changes to noticing regulations implementing ICWA as follows:

- All County Letter

In response to CDSS's legal department, the AOC has reviewed and provided feedback on the pending ACL. AOC has appreciated the opportunity to provide consultation, and will continue to share the expertise with the attorneys in the legal department and those in adoptions who have asked for comments and to research certain issues.

- Los Angeles Protocol

The Los Angeles Probation Department contacted our office to request that the AOC review their draft protocol and provide feedback. The AOC reviewed the document and gave considerable comments. By working with the probation department, we learned about the areas of SB 678 that the Los Angeles juvenile justice system found challenging, and hopefully with the technical assistance, the AOC will be able to continue to provide them with support to improve compliance.

- Notice Proposals to the Bureau of Indian Affairs

The United States Department of the Interior, as part of its consultation process with tribes, state agencies, and other interested parties, solicited comments on proposed amendments to the regulations implementing the Indian Child Welfare Act, 25 U.S.C. § 1901 *et seq.* (ICWA). The AOC submitted comments to the regulations on the ICWA noticing process. In these comments, the AOC proposed ways to address the problem caused by the Federal Register's out-of-date tribal lists for service of process. One option the AOC proposed is the development of a web based data base of tribal agents for service modeled upon the corporate information data base (including agents for service of process) maintained by the California Secretary of State. The idea would be that rather than having the delay associated with awaiting publication of an updated list in the Federal Register, designated addresses for service could be updated on a continuous basis and more quickly reflected in an on line data base. Further, it seems that there could be options for tribes to receive notices by email or other electronic means in addition to the registered mail service mandated by the Act.

In terms of what would be required in order to authorize such a change, we noted that the Act itself does not specify that notice must be sent to a particular tribal representative or address. This procedure is spelled out in the regulations. We also noted that notwithstanding, the Act specifies that notice must be given by registered mail return receipt requested, the regulations authorize personal service of notice. Accordingly this change would not require an amendment to the Act itself.

## **Dependency Drug Courts**

Another example of collaborative effort with the courts is the Dependency Drug Courts (DDC). The DDC monitor families who are involved with the child welfare system and for whom substance abuse is a significant issue. Since 2004, the CDSS has provided technical assistance and staff support to the Judicial Council's Collaborative Justice Courts Advisory Committee and to local efforts to test and disseminate these practices. Currently, there are over 50 DDCs located in 33 counties throughout the state.

The DDC oversees compliance with the law, protection and permanency planning for children and therapeutic interventions for individuals with substance abuse problems. In California and in other states, dependency drug courts have been determined to have important positive effects on child welfare case outcomes.

## **Child Welfare Improvement Project (CWIP)**

An additional collaborative endeavor is the Child Welfare Improvement Project (CWIP) of the Administrative Office of the Courts, Center for Families, Children & the Courts (CFCC). Formed in December 2007, the team combined members from the Court Improvement Program training unit and the Dependency Representation Administration Funding and Training (DRAFT) Project. This team consists of attorneys with juvenile dependency expertise and research analysts, and their mission is to improve safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for children and families involved with child welfare cases. The CWIP teams strives to meet their goals through direct enhancement of court-appointed counsel performance in the individual counties served by the DRAFT program, and through statewide inter-disciplinary training for all professionals involved in child welfare practice. In October 2007, the Judicial Council converted the DRAFT project from a pilot into a program, and allowed its membership to expand from 10 to 20 counties.

In SFY 2007/08, the DRAFT team launched an inter-disciplinary trial skills training program. The idea for this training originated at a multi-disciplinary planning session attended by attorneys and child welfare workers from each of the original DRAFT counties. Designed primarily for attorneys and child welfare workers, CWIP worked with the CalSWEC and the National Institute of Trial Advocacy (NITA) to develop a one-day curriculum designed to:

- Instruct attendees on the differences between legal case theory and social work case assessment.
- Instruct on how to deal with common ethical issues that arise in contested juvenile proceedings.
- Allow attendees to participate and evaluate each other in mock direct and cross examinations.

For the non-DRAFT counties, CWIP was able to implement four-day multi-county trainings to address issues which courts and child welfare face regarding permanency planning and family finding. These programs, held in geographically diverse locations throughout the state and open to all professionals working in child welfare, featured nationally prominent speakers, attorneys from the local district courts of appeal, foster youth, and trainers from CASA and CFCC.

In addition to the planning activities described above, CDSS is also providing technical assistance to the project through quarterly meetings with CWIP staff and its participation on the Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee.

In SFY 2008/09, using a process designed by the CFCC, courts involved in the DRAFT program will be encouraged to assess their dependency policies and operations around the key topics identified by the *2005 Dependency Court Improvement Program Reassessment* as deficiencies or areas in need of further study. The self-assessment tools—modeled on tools developed by CFCC's Domestic Violence Safety Partnership (DVSP) program—will include sections for assessing compliance with state and federal mandates, as well as adherence to best practice standards from the *Resource Guidelines* and elsewhere.

### **Judicial Review and Technical Assistance (JRTA)**

The JRTA project was created in 1995 in response to a 1992 eligibility audit of foster care cases by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of the Inspector General. Federal auditors determined that 39% of the cases reviewed were not eligible for Title IV-E (Social Security Act) funding, and California's programs consequently faced a potential loss of \$51.7 million.

More than 10 years later, the federal government conducted another eligibility review or audit, and in June 2003, California passed that review. The report cited the work of the JRTA project as a strength contributing to the state's compliance. California passed the next eligibility review in June 2006, in part due to the reviews of the local juvenile court systems undertaken by the JRTA project. The next federal review is scheduled for 2009.

The JRTA site visit team works directly with juvenile court judicial officers, court staff, attorneys, and department staff (social workers and probation officers) to improve compliance with Title IV-E. The JRTA project consultants—experienced juvenile court attorneys—visit local juvenile courts, review court files, observe courtroom proceedings, and provide written reports and memoranda as well as technical assistance and training to assist with the implementation of their recommendations. The JRTA project continues to assist courts and counties, as it has done since 1995, by providing the needed training and technical assistance. As the project has evolved, local juvenile courts have initiated requests for legal and court services provided by JRTA.

JRTA staff visited the 14 most populated courts this year and 24 of the remaining 44 courts (with the remainder to be visited next year), to conduct a courtesy review of court files, check for the findings and orders necessary to maintain compliance with Title IV-E and for overall compliance with state and federal laws. Monitoring and follow-up is arranged as needed.

JRTA staff conducted workshops tailored to meet the individual needs of judicial officers, clerks, attorneys, social workers, and probation officers in each county. The workshops focused on federal laws and regulations related to families with children in Title IV-E—eligible placements. Ongoing training and technical assistance is offered to courts by JRTA staff as needed and at the request of local courts.

At the request of local courts, the team conducted a number of permanency and Title IV-E trainings:

- July 2007 in Fresno County for judges, social services, probation, attorneys, and CASAs.
- September 2007 in San Joaquin County for judges, social services, probation, attorneys, and CASAs.
- September 2007 in Madera County for judges, social services, probation, attorneys, and CASAs.
- October 2007 in South Lake Tahoe, El Dorado County for probation.
- November 2007 in Alameda County for judges, social services, and probation.
- November 2007 in Plumas County for judges, social services, and probation.
- December 2007 in Stanislaus County for judges, social services, and probation.

These trainings covered Title IV-E and highlighted permanency planning for foster care children. Agenda items included family finding, independent living skills programs, and engaging youth and family.

At this year's Beyond the Bench Conference, December 2007, the JRTA team, together with Carol Ritchie and Deborah Yip of the Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice, (University of California, Davis Extension), and Commissioner Robert Leventer of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County, conducted a workshop entitled, *Permanency for Youth in Delinquency Court*. The workshop description follows:

All children and youth deserve and need lifelong family connections, regardless of how they come to the attention of the court. With the leadership of the bench and active participation from juvenile probation, social services, and attorneys, we can begin to meet this obligation. Learn how to develop systems that work toward achieving permanency and understand the far-reaching consequences when youth are abandoned on the brink of adulthood.

### **Citizen's Review Panel**

The AOC/Judicial Council also collaborates with CDSS in the statewide Citizen's Review Panel (CRP). The function of CRPs is to evaluate the effectiveness with which state and local child protection agencies are discharging their responsibilities. Evaluation involves examining child protection policies, practices, and procedures. Recommendations are then made to county and state governments for improvement. The membership draws from child advocates, parent leaders, tribal leaders, foundation officers, county mental health managers, county counsels, foster parents, tribal members, foster youth, social workers, and the Judicial Council. Membership is also geographically diverse with representatives from both metropolitan and rural counties in all parts of California.

Each year the panel reviews, provides information and comments upon the Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR), which updates the Title IV-B Child and Family Services plan prior to its submission to Region IX of the Administration for Children and Families.



## **Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)**

Further, the Court Improvement Program (CIP) staff and the JRTA supervising attorney attended all the joint meetings on CFSR, including, serving on the CFSR steering committee and the statewide assessment team. AOC staff assisted with the coordination of regionally-based focus groups; recruiting judicial officers, parents' counsel, children's counsel, and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) to participate. The AOC recruited two judicial officers and four attorneys from the CWIP and JRTA teams to serve as on-site reviewers.

## **Court Improvement Program**

Finally, CDSS staff attended the national Court Improvement Program (CIP) meeting in December 2007 as part of a team including: the CIP staff; Glenn Freitas, Chief, Children's Services Operation and Evaluations Branch; Larry Bolton, Deputy Director/Chief Counsel; Will Sanson, CDSS Consultant for California Court Case Management System (CCMS) and CWS/CMS. The team used the meeting to plan California's coordination of efforts during the CIP meeting.

The CIP entered into an interagency agreement with CDSS to use data resources at the UC Berkeley Center for Social Services Research to provide data on safety and permanency outcomes for children specifically to judicial officers to further their involvement in the state's Outcomes and Accountability project. The CIP staff is also coordinating the input of CDSS and CWS/CMS designers into the upcoming CCMS to align data elements, reduce duplication, enhance information sharing and follow a common schema of performance measurement. A working group on data exchange composed of CFCC, DCSS, county and Court members met for three days in Sacramento and three days in Santa Ana to plan data exchanges.

The CDSS has enjoyed a long and productive collaboration with the AOC and plans to continue the efforts in the future.

## **Training & Technical Assistance Provided**

### **Request for Training & Technical Assistance**

## **Request for Training and Technical Assistance**

As noted throughout the Annual Progress and Services Report, there are instances in which we believe the state would benefit from the training and technical assistance offered through Region IX, either directly provided by the staff, or through a National Resource Center (NRC).

The CDSS continues to monitor counties' progress on their system improvement plans related to a number of areas, such as safety, concurrent planning, etc. Counties in the process of updating their SIPs or who undergo a peer quality case review may identify issues in which they would desire technical assistance. We anticipate in the coming year that some counties will request technical assistance from the National Resource Centers (NRC) through CDSS on a variety of issues. The CDSS issued an All County Information Notice outlining the process by which counties could request training and technical assistance, and continues to encourage counties to use the services offered by the NRCs.

The California plan for training and technical assistance offered through Region IX, either directly provided by the staff, or through a NRC was submitted to Region IX in 2008. A copy of the plan is included in this section.

## **Training and Technical Assistance**

Also included in this section is a list of entities, in addition to CDSS, that provide training and technical assistance to counties through contracts and other means.

Training and technical assistance is provided to California counties through contracts and also directly by California Department of Social Services (CDSS). Training and technical assistance has also been provided by the following groups:

- Administration for Children and Families, Region IX.
- Annie E. Casey Foundation with CDSS (providing a "convening/training" around topics such as recruitment/training and retention of foster parent, youth permanence and disproportionality).
- California Connected by 25 Initiative (supported by the Anne E. Casey Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Charles M. Schwab Foundation, the Stuart Foundation and the Walter S. Johnson Foundation).
- California Permanency for Youth Project (through the Public Health Institute) is funded by the Stuart Foundation, Walter S. Johnson Foundation, S.H. Cowell Foundation, Zellerbach Family Foundation and Casey Family Program.
- CalWORKS/Child Welfare Partnership Project or Linkages.
- Citizen Review Panels (Calaveras and San Mateo counties).

- Connecticut Department of Mental Health and U.C. Berkeley (Supporting Fatherhood Involvement Study).
- Eastfield Ming Quong Family Partnership Institute (EMQ-FPI).
- Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee of the Judicial Council of California.
- Family Support Training Model/Family Resource and Support Training and Technical Assistance Project (“Strategies”).
- Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA) Training.
- Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) Training.
- Judicial Council through the California’s Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Initiative (100% general fund).
- Judicial Council’s Collaborative Justice Advisory Committee.
- Judicial Review and Technical Assistance (JRTA), Center for Families, Children, and the Court, Administrative Office of the Courts, Judicial Council.
- Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP).
- Mental Health Services Act – Wraparound Services.
- National Council on Crime and Delinquency/Children’s Research Center (Structured Decision Making [SDM]).
- National Council on Crime and Delinquency/Children’s Research Center’s SafeMeasures Reporting Service.
- National Resource Center for Child Protective Services.
- National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement (NRCOI).
- Parents Anonymous Inc.
- Specialized Training for Adoptive Parents (STAP).
- Statewide Citizen Review Panel.
- Strategies: Family Resource Center and Family Support Program Training and Technical Assistance. Strategies is comprised of three non-profit organizations: Youth for Change/Paradise Ridge FRC in Butte County (Region 1), Interface Children Family Services in Ventura County (Region 2) and the Children’s

Bureau of Southern California (Region 3).

- Substance Abuse/HIV infant Program (formerly Options for Recovery Perinatal Program).
- The Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC), Case Family Programs and the Peer Technical Assistance Teams.
- The Child and Family Policy Institute of California.
- The Court Improvement Project: Self-Assessment for California Juvenile Dependency Courts.
- The Dependency Court Improvement Project (CIP) of the Administrative Office of the Courts Center for Families, Children and the Courts (CFCC).
- The Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program, including the Peer Technical Assistance.
- The SPHERE Institute (Comprehensive Assessment Tool [CAT]).
- Tribal STAR.
- University of California, Berkeley- Performance Indicators/California Children's Services Archive.

Describe the Training/ Technical Assistance Request	Branch	Timeframe When and # of Days (Estimated)	The need for T/TA is related to the following: (Check the appropriate subject)	Additional Information	National Resource Center/Regional Office Contact
Technical assistance on “customary adoption process” to serve and support the permanency outcomes of the children, youth, and families as traditionally appropriate to the Tribal nations in California.	CPFSB (Susan Nisenbaum/ Teresa Contreras)	Request approved for:  1 day onsite  2/6/08  Kathy Deserly	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>PIP</b> (anticipated) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>CIP</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>CFSP</b> (permanency) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Data Issues SACWIS/AFCARS)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Other needs (specify)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>CFSR</b> (anticipated) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Federal Requirements</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> -Children’s Bureau national T/TA priority: Youth Permanency -Interest expressed by California Tribes regarding impact of traditional adoption models	The T/TA will help the State build capacity to offer Tribally acceptable permanency options for tribal children and youth statewide. The T/TA will better inform the State and Tribal stakeholders regarding how other States and Tribes have used Customary Adoptions to support kin/relative and extended family members who wish to provide permanency to their children and youth via traditional ways.	Office of Child Abuse Prevention has discussed this request with Pat Pianko, John Levesque and Kathy Deserly.  It was approved on 1/10/08 and scheduled with Kathy Deserly for 2/6/08.
Technical assistance on the challenges of implementing Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI). In 2005, Peter Watson had made a presentation on how to implement CQI.	CSOEB (Glenn Freitas/ Linda Hockman)	1 day onsite  Peter Watson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>PIP</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>CIP</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>CFSP</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Data Issues SACWIS/AFCARS)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other needs (specify)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>CFSR</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Federal Requirements</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> -AB636 and Child Welfare Improvement outcomes.	T/TA will improve the CQI implementation and help address barriers to efforts to integrate CQI into daily operations. The development and integration of CQI will improve AB636 and Child Welfare Improvement outcomes. Plan to present CQI process as a “model” for implementation region wide.	National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement.  Phone call w/Region IX and Peter Watson on 1/23/08.  Next step: A conference call to be scheduled after CFSR.

Identify T/TA needs	Branch	Timeframe When and # of Days (Estimated)	Is the need for T/TA related to the following? (Please check the appropriate subject)	Additional Information	Identify the NRC if known
Training and Technical Assistance regarding concurrent planning. In 3/05, LA Co. implemented Concurrent Planning Redesign process. Would like reassessment of implementation and assistance to continue to increase timely permanence for children and youth.	CYPB (Karen Gunderson/ Linda Shill)	3 days onsite  John Levesque and Stephanie Boyd-Serafin	<input type="checkbox"/> PIP <input type="checkbox"/> CIP <input type="checkbox"/> CFSP <input type="checkbox"/> Data Issues SACWIS/AFCARS) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other needs (specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CFSR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal Requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Other -Children's Bureau national T/TA priority-Youth Permanency and Assessment/Engaging Families	Would like to have an objective, external review of the Concurrent Planning Redesign process to determine if better outcomes inc. more timely permanency thru family reunification, legal guardianship and adoption can be obtained.	National Child Welfare Resource Center for Adoption/John Levesque and National Resource center for Family Centered Practice and Permanency Planning/ Stephanie Boyd-Serafin.  Phone call with John Levesque and Region IX on 1/23/08.  Next steps: Written documentation regarding Redesign inc. data. Need conference call for more discussion and more intensive pre-planning prior to onsite visit. Call will be scheduled after the document and CFSR.

Identify T/TA needs	Branch	Timeframe When and # of Days (Estimated)	Is the need for T/TA related to the following? (Please check the appropriate subject)	Additional Information	Identify the NRC if known
T/TA in the area of negotiating the Adoption Assistance Program (AAP) with competencies in: apply adoption assistance policy and regulations to specific children and families, identify organizational/structural barriers to implementing the AAP negotiation process, define and implement action strategies to address the organizational/structural barriers to implementing negotiating adoption assistance.	CSOEB (Glenn Freitas /Frank Sanchez)	3 days onsite  John Levesque, Heidi Staples, and Jane Morgan	<input type="checkbox"/> PIP <input type="checkbox"/> CIP <input type="checkbox"/> CFSP <input type="checkbox"/> Data Issues SACWIS/AFCARS) <input type="checkbox"/> Other needs (specify) <input type="checkbox"/> CFSR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal Requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Other -Title IV-E AAP Federal Policy/Regulations	To enhance and improve staff knowledge, skills and abilities. To insure that adoption assistance payment is indeed determined through the discussion and negotiation process between the adoptive parents and a representative of DCFS based upon the needs of the specific child(ren) and circumstances of the family	National Child Welfare Resource for Adoption/John Levesque  Phone call with John Levesque and Region IX on 1/23/08.  Next step: John Levesque will approach Heidi Staples and Jane Morgan about assisting with this request. Will need conference call but after CFSR.

FFY 2008 Quarters:

- Oct – Dec 07
- Jan – Mar 08
- Apr – Jun 08
- Jul – Sep 08



# **Glossary**

## **GLOSSARY**

### 10-Largest Counties

The 10 counties which, in aggregate, contain 60% of the child welfare services caseload in California. These counties are: Alameda, Fresno, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco and San Mateo.

### Consolidated Home Study

Our current system licenses foster parents, and if a foster parent decides that they wish to adopt a foster child they have in their home, a separate process called an adoptive home study is completed. The consolidated home study is a one-time study that would certify families for foster care and/or adoption, and would facilitate concurrent planning.

### Differential Response (DR)

Differential Response is a new intake structure that responds differentially to all the referrals of child abuse and neglect made to county hotlines/intake in order to support families and reduce the number of placements of children in out-of-home care. Each referral will be evaluated in terms of statutory definitions for child welfare system (CWS) involvement for immediate safety considerations; for the choice of a response time for the initial face-to-face interview and for the path of response. Some referrals will be screened out as not appropriate for CWS. Others will be referred to a community network of response (after permission from the parents/caretakers is granted), and still other referrals will be opened for CWS face to face assessment.

Some CWS face-to-face assessments will be done without anticipating court involvement, but with the expectation that the family will be engaged to participate in services to protect the children and strengthen parental protective capacity as well as child and family well-being. Some initial assessments will be handled by CWS alone, and some by a team including CWS and partner agencies from the community. The purpose of this initial assessment is to understand what is going on within the family, what has to be done immediately to assure child safety and to engage the family in services to support parental responsibilities. All families not screened out will receive a comprehensive assessment as to their needs. This may be done by the community network of services and supports or by CWS – alone or in partnership with team members.

### Fairness and Equity In the Child Welfare Services System

Fairness and Equity in the child welfare services system is characterized by:

- Families whose children enter foster care who are treated the same regardless of race or ethnicity.
- Children's lengths of stay in foster care are not related to their race or ethnicity.
- Children's rates of reunification with their birth families are the same regardless of race or ethnicity.
- Services are culturally competent and available in the languages of the families served.

### The Family to Family Initiative

The Annie E. Casey Foundation, in consultation with community leaders and child welfare practitioners nationwide, developed a reform initiative called Family to Family. Family to Family was designed in 1992 and has now been field tested in sixty communities nationwide. Family to Family is in a total of seventeen states, including Arizona, Alaska, Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Colorado, North Carolina, Georgia, New York (New York City), Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, New Mexico, Oregon, Tennessee, Washington and California.

The Family to Family Initiative provides an opportunity for communities to better screen children being considered for removal from home, to determine what services might be provided to safely preserve the family and/or what the needs of the children are; be targeted to bring children in congregate or institutional care back to their neighborhoods; involve foster families as team members in family reunification efforts; become a neighborhood resource for children and families and invest in the capacity of communities from which the foster care population comes; and provide permanent families for children in a timely manner.

Family to Family is comprised of four core strategies: Recruiting, Training and Supporting Resource Families, Building Community Partnerships, Team Decision Making and Self Evaluation. The Annie E. Casey Foundation's role has been to assist states and communities with a portion of the costs involved in both planning and implementing innovations in their systems of services for children and families, and to make available technical assistance and consultation throughout the process. The Foundation also provided funds for development and for transitional costs that accelerate system change. The states, however, have been expected to sustain the changes they implement when Foundation funding comes to an end.

Counties in California presently participating in the Family to Family Initiative are: Alameda, Contra Costa, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Kern, Los Angeles, Monterey, Orange, Placer, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Francisco, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, Stanislaus, Tehama, Trinity and Ventura.

### Peer Quality Case Reviews (PQCR)

The PQCR is an extension of the county's self assessment process and is guided by questions raised by the analysis of outcome data and systemic factors. The goal of the PQCR is to analyze specific practice areas and to identify key patterns of agency strengths and concerns for the host county. The PQCR process uses peers from other counties to promote the exchange of best practice ideas within the host county and to peer reviewers. The peer reviewers provide objectivity to the process and serve as an immediate onsite training resource to the host county.

### Permanence

Permanence is the maintenance and/or establishment of enduring family attachments. This includes a broad array of individualized permanency options for all children and youth, including Reunification, Adoption, Legal Guardianship and alternative permanent living arrangements, to promote their safety, permanence and well-being.

### Pilot Counties

The 11 pilot counties are counties that volunteered to implement the child welfare system improvements (Standardized Safety Assessment System, Differential Response and Permanency and Youth Transitions). These counties are Contra Costa, Glenn, Humboldt, Los Angeles, Placer, Sacramento, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Stanislaus, Tehama and Trinity.

### Quarterly Reports

Each quarter, the state provides county child welfare agencies with county-specific data on outcome measures related to safety, permanency and well-being. These quarterly reports provide counties with quantitative data and serve as a management tool to track performance over time. The quarters are defined as:

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: January – March

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter: April - June

3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter: July - September

4<sup>th</sup> Quarter: October - December

### Risk, Safety and Needs Assessments

After the initial face-to-face assessment, there will be subsequent meetings with the family to do a comprehensive assessment of strengths and needs, parental protective capacity, ongoing risks and continued review of safety plans. If safety is a continuing concern and the case is being handled by the community network, the agency will re-refer the case to CWS. The nature of the case plan that emerges from the comprehensive assessment will differ based on what has to be done to assure safety, what the goals are for the case, and who should be involved in promoting the necessary changes within the family. The tools for the comprehensive assessment will apply for both in-home and out-of-home cases.

Safety assessments will be done at multiple times during the life of a case. The first face-to-face assessment will be done when direct information is gathered as to the current safety and risk. Based on this initial assessment, safety plans will be put into place immediately, as needed. By gathering information as to the concerns about the protection of the child, by exploring the protective capacity of the parents, and by preliminarily identifying needs for services, the worker will address risk. As the case moves forward to comprehensive assessment and service planning, a more thorough understanding will be obtained of family strengths and needs, as well as changes that must be made to assure the ongoing safety and protection of the child. Services and resources will be evaluated as to their effectiveness in reducing risk and in making an impact towards the needed changes. Decisions on case closure will also address safety, risk and whether necessary changes to assure child safety have been made.

### Team Decision-Making (TDM)

A meeting of key stakeholders in the child's case specifically used to determine placement decisions. The meetings are always facilitated by a trained facilitator.

## Acronym Index

AAP	Adoption Assistance Program
AB	Assembly Bill
AC	Advisory Committee
ACF	Administration of Children and Families
ACIN	All County Information Notice
ACL	All County Letter
ACYF	Administration on Children, Youth and Families
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AFCARS	Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System
AFDC	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AOC	Administrative Office of the Courts
AOD	Alcohol and Other Drugs
APHSA	American Public Human Services Association
APSR	Annual Progress and Services Report
BSC	Breakthrough Series Collaborative
BSW	Bachelor of Social Work
CACI	Child Abuse Central Index
CalSWEC	California Social Work Education Center
CalWORKs	California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids
CAP	Corrective Action Plan
CAPC	Child Abuse Prevention Councils
CAPIT	Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment
CAPTA	Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act
CASA	Court Appointed Special Advocate
CAT	Comprehensive Assessment Tool
CATTA	Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment Training
CBCAP	Community Based Child Abuse Prevention
CBO	Community Based Organizations
CBT	Computer Based Training
CCAT	Children's Collaborative Action Team
CCTA	Central California Training Academy
CDE	California Department of Education
CDMH	California Department of Mental Health
CDR	Child Death Review
CDRT	Child Death Review Team
CDSS	California Department of Social Services
CEBC	California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare
CFCC	Center for Families, Children and the Courts
CFRA	California Resource Association
CFSD	Child and Family Services Division
CFSP	Child and Family Services Plan

CFSR	Child and Family Services Review
CHHS	California Health and Human Services Agency
CIP	Court Improvement Program
CKC	California Kids Connection
CMHDA	California Mental Health Directors Association
CMS	Case Management System
CO-PI	Co-Principal Investigator
CPFSB	Child Protection and Family Support Branch
CPLT	California Parent Leadership Team
CPS	Child Protective Services
CRP	Citizen Review Panels
CSOB	Children Services Operations Bureau
CSPT	California State Parent Team
CWDA	Child Welfare Directors Association
CWIP	Child Welfare Improvement Project
CWS	Child Welfare Services
DCFS	Department of Children and Family Services
DDC	Dependency Drug Courts
DDS	Department of Developmental Services
DHCS	Department of Health Care Services
DMH	Department of Mental Health
DOJ	Department of Justice
DPH	Department of Public Health
DR	Differential Response
DRAFT	Dependency Representation Administration Funding and Training Project
EDD	Employment Development Department
EMQ	Eastfield Ming Quong
ER	Emergency Response
ETV	Education and Training Vouchers
FDM	Family Development Matrix
FFY	Federal Fiscal Year
FIRST	Family Infant Relationship Support Training
FM	Family Maintenance
FR	Family Reunification
FRC	Family Resource Centers
FRCNLAC	Family Resource Center Network of Los Angeles County
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICAMA	Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance
ICPC	Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children
ICWA	Indian Child Welfare Act
ILP	Independent Living Program
JRTA	Judicial Review and Technical Assistance
KinGAP	Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment Program
KSSP	Kinship Support Services Program
MEPA	Multi-Ethnic Placement Act

MPP	Manual of Policies and Procedures
MSW	Master of Social Work
NCCD	National Council on Crime and Delinquency
NCFR	National Council on Family Relations
NGA	National Governor's Association
NICU	Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
NIDCAP	Newborn Individualized Development Care and Assessment Project
NITA	National Institute of Trial Advocacy
NRC	National Resource Center
NRCOI	National Center for Organizational Improvement
OCAP	Office of Child Abuse Prevention Bureau (in CFSD)
OSPPU	Out-of-State Placement Policy Unit
P&EI	Prevention and Early Intervention Training
PAC	Prevention Advisory Council
PCWTA	Public Child Welfare Training Academy
PL	Public Law
PMI	Pathway Mapping Initiative (Harvard University)
PQCR	Peer Quality Case Reviews
PSSF	Promoting Safe and Stable Families Act
RCFFP	Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice
RTA	Regional Training Academies
SA/HIV	Substance Abuse / Human Immunodeficiency Virus
SACWIS	Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System
SAP	Student Assistance Program
SDM	Structured Decision Making
SFI	Supporting Father Involvement
SFY	State Fiscal Year
SGF	State General Fund
SIP	Self-Improvement Plan
SIT	State Interagency Team
SPA	Service Planning Area
SSA	Social Security Administration
SSB	Safely Surrendered Baby
SSI	Social Security Income
SSS	Screening Survey Summary
SSTP	Special Start Training Program (Mills College)
STAP	Specialized Training for Adoptive Parents
STAR	Successful Transitions to Adult Readiness
T4T	Training for Trainers
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
THPP	Transitional Housing Placement Program (ages 16-18)
THP-Plus	Transitional Housing Placement Plus Program (ages 18-24)
TILP	Transitional Independent Living Program